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SWITZERLAND AND ITALY.

TWO JOURNEYS

THROUGH

ITALY

AND

SWITZERLAND

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ac

BY

WILLIAM THOMSON,

ASSISTANT COMMISSARY-GENERAL TO THE FORCES.

"ANIMI CULTUS QUASI QUIDAM HUMANITATIS CIBUS."

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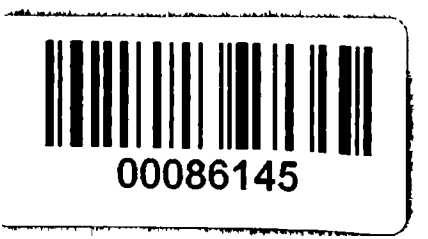

PREFACE.

ANOTHER volume of Travels may appear an unnecessary addition to the mass, already accumulated, of this description of literature—more especially as the path along which the reader of the following pages will be conducted is by no means an unbeaten one. I have visited no unknown regions, met with no surprising adventures, and discovered no remarkable objects which have not already been described by abler pens. Yet I publish this volume, believing, notwithstanding these disadvantages, that its contents may be found not altogether destitute of interest.

It contains an account of two journeys through Switzerland and Italy; the first, in 1824, when on my way to join the British troops stationed at Malta; and the second, in 1826, when I returned to England. During

these journeys I enjoyed the opportunity I had long ardently desired of gratifying my love for the great and the beautiful in nature and art, by visiting the magnificent scenery of Switzerland, and surveying the monuments of ancient and modern art, which are the richest treasures of Italy. The impressions which I received from every thing I saw were daily recorded in my journal, and communicated from time to time to my friends in the form of letters. When these were written, nothing could be further from my thoughts than the idea of their publication; but this step has been so often suggested and pressed upon me by persons who have read them, that I am at length induced to adopt it. It may be allowable for me to mention, in particular, that my friend the late Mr. STOTHARD, thought it worth his while to make extracts, for his own use, from the accounts of the galleries and collections of painting and sculpture given in these letters, and was one of those who most warmly recommended their publication, as containing matter that would be interesting and valuable to the lovers and students of those arts. The approbation of so distinguished an artist and

so accomplished a critic, has given me some confidence in the soundness of my opinions—opinions which I formed for myself while looking upon the masterpieces of antiquity and of the Augustan age of modern Italy: and, I believe, I may venture to add, that an equal quantity of information on the subject of the fine arts in that country is nowhere to be found in so small a compass.

This volume is calculated to be a useful pocket-companion to travellers who may visit the countries to which it relates. It will give them information as to the most convenient modes of travelling, and serve as a guide to direct their attention to the most interesting objects. And the general reader will derive from it some addition to his stock of knowledge regarding the present political and social condition of the Italian States, which is in every respect what it was ten years ago.

London, July, 1835.

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SWITZERLAND AND ITALY.

LETTER I.

Calais.—Road to Paris.—Observations in Paris.—Père la Chaise.

PARIS, 6th April, 1824.

SINCE I left London I have seen nothing that is not now familiar to thousands of my countrymen, who can come here with such perfect facility. On the 27th ultimo, I sailed from the Tower Stairs in the Lord Melville steamer for Calais, where we landed at half-past eight P.M., after a passage of eleven hours. I was lodged for the night at Quillaq's Hotel, which combines comfort and elegance with great attention and reasonable charges.

After breakfast I went on in the diligence to Paris. Just before sunset we passed the river

Canche, and through the venerable town of Montreuil, surrounded by its mouldering fortifications and deep ditches, which were thrown into bold light and shade by the slanting rays of the sun amidst bright, round, yellow clouds. Passing through Nampont and Nouvion, we alighted, at eleven o'clock, at Abbeville. On the morning of the 29th, while breakfast was preparing at Beauvais, I stepped as far as the ancient Gothic cathedral, to see the richly coloured glass windows; but I was not many minutes in the church, when a crowd of importunate filthy beggars beset and fairly bearded me out. At a quarter past six in the evening we reached Paris.

Since my arrival, the weather has been unsettled; and nothing can be more miserable than the streets in Paris when it rains. They are narrow, without side pavements; and while a pedestrian is refreshed with a shower-bath, gratis, from the impending tin spouts of the houses, he is bespattered without mercy by all sorts of vehicles in crowded streets, and stands in constant danger of being run over, if not very vigilant. There is much amusement in strolling on the Boulevards, to observe the variety of

character and absurdities that one meets with; as also along the quays, bridges, and suburbs, where the appearance of many of the lower orders cannot fail to arrest an Englishman's attention. A system of finesse pervades every thing here; it extends to the very décrotteur, who stands shivering in the street, endeavouring, as a John Bull passes, to insure his custom in recommending his "noir Anglais".

The title of professeur is held wonderfully cheap; and as a proof, one need only walk over the Pont Neuf to see the outré beings who crowd the sides of it in their various callings, as each person's sign-board denotes. The man that clips the hair from a dog's back is a professor, with his name painted on a board behind a stall, whereon is also written his readiness to trim dogs, buy and sell them, or take as boarders sick dogs or cats.

As my stay will be short, I endeavour to make the best use of my time, by seeing the different public buildings, exhibitions, gardens, &c., during the day, and attending some place of public amusement at night.

Since the assassination of the Duc de Berri, at the Royal Academy of Music, in the Rue

Richelieu, the building has been pulled down, and the ground, it seems, is to be consecrated by the erection of a church on the site of the theatre.

A theatre in the Rue Pelletier was consequently erected for the above extensive national establishment. It is slightly put together, although very tastefully decorated throughout on a light blue ground. The house is lighted with gas; the orchestra is composed of first rate talent, and the principal singers are very good; but although ample justice is done to the music of the French school, it appears to me, with few exceptions, to be noisy and mediocre. But there is no occasion for my entering into any particulars respecting French singing, dancing, or acting, for we are now nearly as familiar with them as with our own.

I lately happened to meet with an Englishman, whose wife died in Paris, and was buried at Père la Chaise. As he wished to visit her grave, he begged I would accompany him, which I did, as I was desirous of seeing that interesting cemetery. Outside of the barrier leading to it, a number of women were employed in making garlands of dried flowers,

which are sold to relatives of the deceased to hang over the grave, whenever a visit is made to the place. The day was fine, and a great number of persons were viewing the monuments of the dead. In various spots men, women, and children were kneeling over the graves of departed relatives, while others might be seen hanging a garland of flowers on the railing that surrounded their mortal remains.

The monuments are very varied in shape and execution, according to the rank and character of the deceased. Over many of the graves are planted the weeping willow, ever-greens, or flowers. At the entrance, the tomb of Abelard and Eloisa was pointed out to me, although I am somewhat sceptical as to stone memorials of the dead that have been moved from one place to another, as has been the case with many monuments now placed in Père la Chaise. Among the monuments of the illustrious dead, I was particularly struck with those erected to the memory of Molière, Fontaine, and other celebrated writers, as in them I thought one could trace the genius of the people. Those that have been raised for Lefebvre and Massena are of a costly description, while a com-

mon iron railing is all that encompasses the grave of the ill-fated Ney. The youthful La Bedoyère, who at an earlier period shared Ney's fate, lies here under a handsome stone raised by his fond mother, who has inscribed on it in simple language, "Ici repose Charles Angélique François Huchet, Comte de La Bedoyère, né le 17 Avril, 1786, enlevé à tout ce qui lui était cher le 19 Août, 1815."

We returned home by the ruins of the Bastile, and passed through the quarter of Saint Antoine, where many bloody scenes were perpetrated during the revolution.

I shall take my departure to-morrow for Geneva, where you will probably hear from me.

LETTER II.

Journey from Paris to Dijon.—Jura Mountains.—Geneva. —Environs.—Voltaire.—Bijouterie.—Pictures.—Roads impassable.

GENEVA, 15th April, 1824.

THIS is a very inconvenient season for either entering or leaving Switzerland, as I have already experienced. The sun's power is now felt over the ice-bound mountain roads, but the masses of snow and ice which are melted under the influence of meridian heat, again partially freeze, and the passing clouds in those regions still frequently emit vast quantities of snow, which serve to make the traveller's route in many places difficult and tedious.

On my way hither, I stopped for one night at Dijon, in the department of the Côte d'Or.

Dijon is well built of stone. It is a comfortable looking place, surrounded by a rampart commanding views of a country filled with ex-

tensive vineyards, well cultivated fields, and numerous villages.

It contains many churches. The cathedral has some remains of good Gothic architecture, but was much defaced during the revolution. After quitting Dijon, the villages through which we passed were wretched and comfortless. In respect to domestic economy, the French are far behind us and their industrious neighbours in Holland, or even their poorer ones of Switzerland.

The small town of Poligny, beautifully situated at the foot of the Jura Mountains, is a sweet residence.

It rained without ceasing after we left Dijon, which prevented my enjoying the prospect of the extensive wine district between Dijon and Beaune.

At Poligny we found the rain converted into thickly falling snow.

Our mountain labours now commenced, by making the ascent with seven horses. After going at a very slow pace for six leagues, the conductor allowed the poor horses to rest a little while at Champagnole, a place in a wild, picturesque situation, overhanging a wooded ravine

on a rapid stream, which was swelled by an accumulation of melted ice and snow.

Both the driver and conductor shewed great skill and caution while descending some abrupt turnings along the brink of lofty precipices. On the second morning after leaving Dijon, we stopped at a poor mountain inn at Saint Laurent to breakfast. The snow continued to fall without any intermission, so as at length to cover all traces of the road. Traîneaux were now prepared for our reception, far more primitive in appearance than the rudest sledge I have ever seen in Canada. They were besides full of dust, and covered with rotten canvass, so as to let us have the full violence of the storm. Two persons were placed in each traîneau, and the baggage in separate sledges. We were preceded by two men carrying poles, at the extremity of which were fixed broad flat pieces of iron, to clear away accumulated snow. They trampled down the soft snow and used their long spades with much dexterity, whilst at other times where the roads were better, they ran so fast that our horses were kept at a smart trot in order to keep up with them.

The French frontier is at Les Rousses, where

the baggage was examined and passports demanded for registry.

While those operations were going on, the passengers were ushered into a miserable habitation, in which we saw a group of men, women, and children dining on soup made of grits, milk, and coarse bread. All we could muster for dinner was potatoes, an omelette, sour bread, and some poor wine.

In descending the Jura chain, the fine view of Geneva was hidden from us by the bad state of the weather, which retarded our progress so much that we did not reach our destination till eleven o'clock at night,—nine hours past the regular time. There are some large hotels in Geneva, besides numerous furnished lodgings. The former are not remarkable for comfort, and the keepers seem to understand the art of making out a bill. I am lodged at L'Ecu de Genève, where there is nothing comfortable with the exception of dinner at the table d'hôte, which is however served up at too early an hour for the English to relish. It is so managed that the Swiss may again have an appetite and opportunity for enjoying a substantial hot supper.

Geneva itself is rather dull and uninviting, although to the lovers of rural life and the admirers of all that constitutes noble landscape, the surrounding country will make some amends. The chief attraction of Geneva is in its intelligent and cultivated society, with which I have had little opportunity of becoming acquainted. The town is fortified, and seems to have been built on a very irregular plan. The best houses are erected on a high terrace which commands extensive prospects of the clear blue lake, many well cultivated farms, numerous seats, chalets, cooling streams, and stupendous mountains whose tips pierce the clouds, and which are locked up in eternal snow.

Nothing can exceed the blue, pellucid appearance of the Rhone, which holds its course distinguishable through the lake of Geneva, whence it issues, and joins the river Arve at a short distance from the town. The weather is now more settled, and I am occasionally accompanied in my walks by Mr. L., to whom I was introduced by our worthy friend Mr. A. W. The effects of the rising and setting sun on this "land of the mountain and the flood" are often as extraordinary as

they are strikingly beautiful. Its departing rays on the snow-clad mountain sometimes convert its pure whiteness into a dazzling pink colour, which continues till the sun's fainter light gradually changes it to a greyish hue.

Three days ago I visited Voltaire's retreat at Ferney, a few miles from this city. Our party consisted of four persons in a char au banc. Opposite the small village of Ferney stands the house once occupied by Voltaire. The rising ground on which it is built commands views of Geneva, the lake, and an amazing range of pastoral and mountain scenery. The garden where the author spent many of his hours is quite neglected. On entering the house we found it partly occupied by a poor farmer's family, who conduct visitors over Voltaire's apartments, which we were told are in the same state as when he was alive. If this is true, his ostentation could not have been great, as the furniture consists of a common table, a few chairs, and a clumsy French bois de lit fitted up with the ordinary, identical bedding on which this extraordinary man died. A small portrait of Le Kain hangs under a tattered green silk canopy near the bed, and on another wall are prints in

frames, of Newton, Franklin, and Washington, as likewise a portrait of Voltaire in crayons. There is a marble urn in one of the rooms, and from the inscription on it we learnt that it contains the heart of Voltaire.—"Son esprit est partout, et son cœur est ici."

Geneva is divided into two unequal parts by the Rhone, being partly on the margin of the narrowest portion of the lake, which is the least interesting, and partly on more elevated ground. It has a population of 25,000 persons, is a place of considerable resort for foreigners whose objects are retirement and tranquillity, and vast numbers of travellers pass through the town from all parts of Europe. Inn-keeping is an excellent trade in Switzerland, but it is rather surprising that Geneva cannot boast of a single hotel worthy of notice.

This part of Switzerland is inhabited by numerous manufacturers of clocks, watches, &c., and Geneva is filled with extensive workshops for making a variety of jewellery, musical machinery for snuff-boxes, &c. It is pretended that every article of the above kind is made cheaper than in other places; but the watches and jewels have a flimsy, toy-like appearance,

far inferior to those of English manufacture. Few strangers can resist the temptation of purchasing something—particularly when their ears are tickled by the liquid sounds of a tiny box or seal, which can be had at a trifling expense and carried away in one's waistcoat pocket.

With Mr. L——'s son I went over Mr. Peaute's manufactory, where we saw men and women occupied in different branches of the making of clocks, watches, and jewellery. We afterwards called on Mr. F——e, the clever miniature painter, who was a resident at Moscow during the French invasion, when he lost the whole of his property in the conflagration. All that this excellent man had amassed during a great many years of painful industry perished on that awful occasion, when, with considerable difficulty and after many afflicting privations, he saved his own life by flight. After all his misfortunes, poor F——e is nearly as cheerful and agreeable as when you knew him in England. He is highly esteemed here, and I am happy to find he is fully employed. Mr. F——e took me to the house of his friend Mr. Duval, who was also a resident at Moscow

when it was destroyed. This gentleman is an admirer and patron of the arts. With incredible difficulty and expense he contrived to save a charming collection of paintings from the flames of Moscow, which were in the first instance transported to England and thence to Geneva. I felt an unusual interest to see a collection that had been saved with such noble resolution from destruction at so momentous a crisis; and I was further gratified in finding so many gems of art thus preserved for the enjoyment of so worthy an owner. Among others which attracted me were, a picture of a saint said to be by Guido,—three beautifully finished cabinet paintings of Du Jardin,—cattle drinking at a well, by Vandevelde,—a sweet specimen of Ostade,—and a richly finished portrait of a lady reading, by Mieris. An antique statue, too, of a young faun in a graceful attitude, is not to be forgotten. The rooms are rather too low and not sufficiently lighted for pictures, but they are kept in excellent order. Every morning I derive much amusement in walking through the markets to see the peasants in their becoming costumes; and I spend an hour of

the day at the Musée, where the French and English newspapers are regularly received.

The roads bordering the lake and through the Valais are in a flooded state and impassable, in consequence of the thaws which now prevail. I am very anxious to be on the other side of the Alps, and have engaged a place in the courier's carriage as far as Milan; but he says the roads are not expected to be in travelling condition before the 18th, or thereabouts.

LETTER III.

The Canton of Valais.—The Simplon.—Roads.—Modes of Travelling.—Italy.

MILAN, 21st April, 1824.

ON Sunday, the 18th, I quitted Geneva. After we left it about five miles behind, a noble prospect presented itself of the city, with the Jura mountains mantled in snow in the distance, and the unruffled bosom of the lake, with the windings of the road as the foreground. Towards sunset, Chillon's snow-white battlements, which have been immortalized by Lord Byron, made their appearance. The most beautiful scenes of Rousseau's Heloise are laid at Clarens and Villeneuve, in the neighbourhood of Chillon, and among the rocks of Meillerie, over which the road passes. The embouchure of the turbid Rhone opens into the Lake of Geneva between Villeneuve and St. Gingulph. During its course through the lake, the Rhone casts off its impu-

rities, and appears, as before noticed, at Geneva, whence it flows in a varied course to Lyons, Valence, Tarascon, and lastly falls into the Mediterranean. We did not reach St. Maurice till past nine at night, where we were detained two hours at a miserable inn. In the morning, when I awoke from an indifferent nap, we were rolling through the canton of Valais, surrounded by mountains from two to twelve thousand feet in height. The Valais is enclosed on the north by the Bernese Alps, in which rise the Jungfrau and Gemmi; and on the south by the chain of the Alps from Mont Blanc to St. Gothard, including Mont Rosa.

An hour after the sun rose, the mists of the morning being partially dispersed, opened a succession of hills, villages, and forest-scenery to our view; but no description can do justice to the transient effects of the early dawn over the Swiss landscape. The style of their building is peculiar and striking, combining many conveniencies in a changeable climate, with durability, simplicity, and picturesque appearance. The costumes of the Swiss peasantry are beautiful and becoming. In each canton they are different: and their effect is very striking when

the inhabitants of different districts are sometimes brought together at great annual fairs.

At a small village below Brigge we rested the horses. A number of young men and women were enjoying a waltz in one of the rooms at the inn, while four damsels sung and marked time with the clapping of their hands. Their dresses were different from those of the peasants round Geneva, though not so becoming. Instead of the straw hat, with the hair in long plaits, they wear a black beaver hat close over the head, ornamented with gilt bands or artificial flowers, and the hair tied up.

The greater part of the women beyond the age of thirty were disfigured by goitres or large excrescences from the throat. The disease, which is not dangerous, is ascribed to drinking snow-water, although medical men deny it to be the cause, which has never been properly ascertained. Idiocy also abounds among them.

On the same night we slept at Brigge; and at two o'clock the next morning we commenced the ascent of the Simplon by moonlight. There was now a rise of six thousand feet before us to its summit. About sunrise we quitted the carriage for wretched sledges, as we then found

the road covered to a considerable depth with snow and ice. After we had accomplished a certain part of the ascent, I could scarcely believe we were in such elevated ground, in consequence of the very gradual inclination of the road which brings a traveller so imperceptibly through the wild Alpine mountains of Switzerland to the glowing regions of Italy, without the consciousness of fatigue or difficulty,—with the exception of the present season of the year, or during the violence of the winter's storms, which throw their natural impediments in the traveller's path, and cause a temporary inconvenience. It is by turning round and casting a downward look on the base of the Simplon, and the diminished houses under it, with their surrounding fields, that the traveller is at first made sensible of the easy progress over the mountain; and I enjoyed the last glimpse of the village of Brigge by moonlight amidst its meadows under the impending glaciers, while the driver rested our horses.

When the morning's first rays developed the scenery more distinctly, there was an extensive glacier in front of the road, which had the undulated appearance of the sea; but there was a

total absence of verdure and of those wild flowers which lay scattered over the ground and among the precipices in yesterday's journey. Summer and winter seemed to hold divided sway during the day-time. In some places, where the sun's power acted upon the softer snow, it was converted into a moving mass of water, which rushed over precipices, and found its way into the hollows of the mountains or the numerous artificial beds which convey the roaring element under the traveller, as he is crossing the stone bridges built over gullies or narrow ravines; while in other situations Nature was bound up in the compacted snows of many months, which covered the road to the depth of seven or eight feet. Besides the stone galleries scooped out of the solid rock, through which we passed, I was somewhat astonished when the sledge was drawn under a long gallery cut through snow which had been hurled from the side of the mountain over the road. In different parts of the pass we saw labourers levelling the drifted snow. They were masked with black crape, as a protection to the eyes against the glare of the snow, which very soon induces inflammation. In consequence of

the dangerous condition of some places of our route, several of those men were called in to assist us in keeping the sledges upright, and occasionally to level the blocks of snow which impeded our progress. As many delays and difficulties were encountered, we did not reach the summit until two o'clock, P.M.; but we descended at a rapid pace to the village of the Simplon*, where we stopped to dine and fared sumptuously. As we advanced towards the wild gorges of the Dovedro, the snow was rapidly disappearing under the influence of a warmer temperature; and immediately after passing the village, we had the satisfaction of treading the bare road in quitting the sledge for a comfortable carriage.

The gallery near Gondo is one of the artificial wonders of the Simplon. It is hewn through granite, and forms a passage of 596 feet long. At its opening on the Italian side, the waterfall of the Frasinone lashes against the rock, seeming to forbid man's approach; but his skill and perseverance have overcome this formidable natural obstruction by

* This village is 4,800 feet above the level of the sea.

means of a bridge built across the foaming waters. Here the ravine is hemmed in by dark rocks and mountains, from whose summits torrents of melted snow are seen rushing with irresistible impetuosity to the hollows below.

A little past three o' clock, the courier told me we were entering "la bella Italia!" As we descended into the plain, through a road among precipices, pines, and banks enamelled with shrubs and wild flowers, the low-roofed houses, terraces, and trees in blossom gave the assurance of our having arrived in the fairer regions of Italy. The Veriola, which is the offspring of a glacier, was seen holding on its foaming course through a ravine covered with immense rocks, but we soon lost sight of it, and alighted at Domo d' Ossola before sunset. The short space which elapses in being transferred from the Swiss to the Italian side of the Alps, has the appearance of a dream; and at this season, the sudden change of climate, scenery, and cultivation are indescribably exhilarating and grateful to all the senses.

At Domo d' Ossola we remained about two hours, which I employed in rambling through the neighbouring vineyards, and in afterwards

visiting, at the Ave Maria, the principal church, which appeared to be very large and handsome for so insignificant a place.

Early on the following morning, we skirted along the shore of the beautiful Lago Maggiore, partially covered with mist. On approaching Arona, we descried the colossal bronze statue of San Carlo Borromeo, which is 112 feet high including the pedestal, considered one of the modern wonders of Italy. After crossing the river Tesino at Arona, we quitted Sardinia, and entered the Lombardo-Venetian States at Cesto Calende. The route of the Strada Sempione then commences, and continues through a rich valley. At noon our journey closed by arriving in this city.

LETTER IV.

Passage of the Simplon.—Milan Cathedral, Statues, &c. —Churches.—Corso.—La Brera.—Leonardo da Vinci's Fresco of the Last Supper.

MILAN, 22d April, 1824.

WHEN Hannibal crossed the Alps with his army for the invasion of Italy, he spent fifteen days in accomplishing the passage, after losing many thousands of his men from exposure and fatigue. Art and labour overcome the greatest difficulties; and their full value is strikingly manifest in the magnificent highways so rapidly formed during the vigorous administration of Napoleon. The Passage of the Simplon—including the galleries pierced through the solid rock, bridges connecting precipices or breaches in the mountain, and numerous houses of refuge —is the most stupendous work of our time; and if it had been in existence when the brave Carthaginian general led his troops into Italy,

he would have done it within two days with great ease and safety. In commemoration of that useful work, Napoleon ordered a triumphal arch to be raised at Milan, as entered from Switzerland; but such is the strange uncertainty of all human power, that before the materials were ready to be placed together, Napoleon was dethroned and a prisoner. Since that period, the pillars, stones, &c., for the intended Arch of the Simplon have lain neglected under a wooden shed.

Having been deprived of the comfort of a bed for three nights, I felt a little fatigued on reaching Milan; but as my stay was limited, I determined to see the cathedral, after taking an early dinner. The external plan of the Duómo accords with no strict architectural beauty, being a heterogeneous mixture of Gothic and Greek orders, covered with spiritless bassi relievi and statues of no merit. It was commenced in the fourteenth century; but such is the complication of the design, that it still remains unfinished. Statuaries and masons are occupied in the destruction of more marble, to be converted into mute saints, &c., destined to stand in company with those numerous worthies who

already have scarcely elbow-room*. I believe that Gamodia, a German, gave the original design for this church in 1386, which was mixed Gothic; but as several architects in succession superintended the slow progress of the building towards completion, other orders have been added, and the whole exhibits a most incongruous melange. Nevertheless, the beauty of the marble, the three immense doors in front, the multitude of statues in their carved Gothic recesses, as well as on the summit of the cathedral, and the colossal figure of bronze over the dome, are very imposing when viewed from the square, which is in front of the building, at such a distance as to lose the details in different masses. The interior has a grandeur and a unity of design at once striking and beautiful. The nave runs up to the chancel without any intervening screen, forming a vista of nearly 500 feet, through pillars 93 feet long.

The great altar is placed in the chancel fronting the choir; and the carved temple which constitutes a part of it is surrounded by angels,

* There are 4,300 statues inside and outside of the cathedral.

all of bronze. The whole is relieved by white drapery, and lighted rather sparingly; adding considerably to the solemnity of this immense sanctuary. The mosaic pavement of the choir is extremely beautiful, being an imitation of flowers and foliage.

A stranger as I was to the splendour of the Catholic church in Italy, I could not help being the more forcibly struck by the magnificence of the Duómo, which is next to that of St. Peter's itself.

But to witness the Duómo in all its solemnity, one must visit it at vespers, when the flickering flame of the lamps partially lighted scarcely shews the different altars, where the Catholics kneel while in the last act of daily devotion. The cathedral certainly contains a numerous collection of costly altars, monuments, pictures, and statues; but it possesses nothing remarkable as a work of art, after all the immense sums which have been lavished in its meretricious embellishment. The Archbishop Carlo Borromeo, whose unbounded charity and useful life well merited canonization, is enshrined in a subterranean chapel in a crystal coffin lined with silver, surrounded by precious stones, and two

statues larger than life in silver of St. Carlo and St. Ambrose. It is kept constantly lighted by lamps, and numbers are daily admitted to witness its splendour. In the sanctuary there is a marble statue—the admiration of the Milanese—of St. Bartholomew flayed, with the skin hanging behind the head, and from the trunk and limbs. The sculptor has had the modesty to inscribe under it, "Non me Praxiteles, sed Marcus fecit Agrates." The subject is certainly disgusting, and the figure is better suited for a dissecting-room than a church. Before I leave the cathedral, I must not omit mentioning my ascent of 400 feet to the spire; and, from such an elevation, you may conceive there is a most extensive prospect of the surrounding plains. They are extremely well cultivated, and intersected by numerous canals. The majestic Alps shrouded in snow terminate the landscape towards the north; while on the other side the faint line of the Apennines is scarcely visible.

On the following day I walked through the whole city, accompanied by a valet-de-place. We commenced the day's excursion at the Borgo di Porta Orientale, which is one of the longest streets in Milan, where Napoleon resided when

crowned King of Italy. At the top of the street, a rude ancient pillar still stands, which is quite as Gothic as its founder, Frederick Barbarossa. The public gardens are at the other extremity, which communicate with the Grand Corso, outside of the town, where all the fashionables of the place, among whom are the handsomest women of Northern Italy, assemble on Sundays in gay equipages, while the harmonious sounds of a fine military band enliven the scene.

In passing along, I took a peep at the church of St. Angelo, and the hospital of Benefratelli, for the reception and maintenance of a hundred indigent old men. In the former are some handsome marble altars, and pictures painted by Proccacini.

We entered the church of St. Mark, during the service of mass. Many well dressed females were kneeling, their fine forms beautifully relieved by the crimson damask on the walls, whose rich colour was rendered quite dazzling by a stream of sunshine through the opposite windows.

After passing through a great part of the old town, I visited the Brera, containing the

public gallery of painting and sculpture, and the library. The Marriage of the Virgin, by Raphael, in his earliest manner, is a solitary specimen, and although not a fine one, it cost 52,000 francs. But the same subject, by Dominichino, in another room, is a noble composition. A Descent from the Cross, by Tintoretto, is replete with expression and effect. The Rape of Proserpine, by Albano, is a small picture of exquisite finish. Salvator Rosa's Hermit is full of appalling solitude; and Nicolo Poussin's St. John in the Wilderness is cleverly painted. In Abraham sending away Hagar, by Guercino, Hagar's heavy eye and look of anguish, and the aspect of compassion on the part of Abraham, must leave an indelible impression on a feeling mind. These specimens, after a cursory view, I thought the best. Among the sculpture I saw no remarkable antique; but there are two modern works of transcendent merit in Canova's Vestal and Thorwalsden's group of the Graces. You will have noticed that any observations which I have ventured to make on works of art have been general. By being more minute I should have only betrayed an

incapacity of conveying any adequate conception to your mind. Indeed, even the most elaborate description of a building, statue, or picture, can never place the object correctly before a person who has not seen it. However vivid may be the recollection of the writer, he can rarely do more than present a very confused and faint idea to the reader.

In the refectory of the suppressed Dominican convent, belonging to a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, called Delle Grazie, is the celebrated fresco, by Leonardo da Vinci, of the Last Supper. With a vivid recollection of Morghen's superb engraving of it, I was wofully disappointed to behold the miserable wreck of the original. Christ's head is in a tolerable state, although, as is generally believed, it was never finished; and the right hand is obliterated. The head of St. John, on the right of our Saviour, is nearly destroyed, and the remaining heads on the same side are much injured. The two figures on his left are in better preservation, but the remainder are in a sad state of decay. The feet of Christ have long since disappeared, with an opening which was made

to another room, but now built up; and as to the lower extremities of the disciples, they are barely visible. I believe that not a vestige of Da Vinci's pencil remains. We are told that, in fifty years after the fresco was finished, it was found to be almost obliterated. In the year 1726, the colours were renewed by Bellotti; and in 1772, a presumptuous dauber, Muzza, was permitted nearly to complete its destruction. He scraped off a great part of the surface, and laid a fresh ground of cement and colours. His destructive hand was ultimately arrested, but only in time to save the figures of St. Thomas, Mathias, and Simon.

On the opposite wall is a picture of the Crucifixion, by Montarfano, executed in 1495; and the adjoining portion of the building is used as a Caserne for gens-d'armes. In a small church in the neighbourhood are some frescos, said to have been executed by Da Vinci when young. It is to be regretted that many of the greatest old masters wasted their time and talents in covering the walls of damp churches with perishable frescos, which want the roundness, depth, transparency, and harmony of oil painting.

Milan has produced some fine engravers; and Lunghi, who is well known by his works, resides here, where he is amply employed.

I am now going to the theatre of La Scala for the first time, with one of my fellow travellers, who is waiting for me. Much have I read and heard of its fame. My expectations are consequently wound up to their highest pitch.

LETTER V.

La Scala.—Walk through Milan.—The Amphitheatre.—General Remarks.—Austrian Government.

MILAN, 23d April, 1824.

LA SCALA, after San Carlos at Naples, is the largest and most commodious opera house in Europe. It has a spacious Platea, which widens considerably towards the stage, surrounded by five tiers of boxes, and there is a gallery above, where the gods are seated in glorious invisibility.

The boxes are commodious, and many of them are fitted up for conversaziones and supper parties. They communicate with a terrace, where it is very agreeable to retire occasionally in summer from the heat of the theatre. In the same building are gaming tables, billiards, and rooms for refreshments. The spectators, being thus accommodated, seldom listen to the music, and it is sometimes

impossible to hear the performances for their noise. As the audience sit under a very sparing light, they have a dismal aspect, but the smallness of the light adds wonderfully to the effect of the stage, which is the aim sought for both here and in France.

I saw the opera of Semiramide, which did not commence till about nine o'clock. The noble orchestra quite astounded me, and Galli was equally delightful from his skill as a singer as the chaste style of his acting. After so lately seeing a ballet at Paris, I did not expect to be taken by surprise at Milan. Some of the Italian dancers are, however, remarkably fine women, and amazingly skilful in describing the story of a ballet, by the most exquisite gestures imaginable. To their movements, the happy phrase of one of our writers —"the poetry of motion"—may with great propriety be applied.

I commenced this day's excursion at the Porto Nuovo, which is a fine arch, with bassi relievi on it, surmounted by pedestals, originally designed for the busts of Napoleon and members of his family. After traversing the Place d'Armes, I reached the amphitheatre, which is

a building in the style of a Roman circus, erected by the French. The principal entry to the arena is through a grand saloon. Bassi relievi are painted on its walls; they are beautifully executed, and a perfect deception. There is a handsome portico in front supported by eight pillars of polished marble. This building is of the elliptic form, 800 feet in length, capable of containing 40,000 persons seated, round the area of exhibition. In the centre there is a fine piece of water capable of great expansion.

If the sway of Napoleon had continued, he seemed determined to exhibit to the modern Italians some of the favourite spectacles of the Romans in the days of Vespasian and Domitian. When the young King of Rome was born, an expensive Naumachia was got up in the Amphitheatre for the edification of the good citizens of Milan.

In returning to the hotel, I stepped into the Basilica Ambrosiana, the most ancient church of Milan, where the bones of St. Ambrose are laid. The chief altar is supported by four pillars of Egyptian porphyry. The pulpit is

curiously carved and decorated with bassi relievi in marble. There are some antiquities of a doubtful history deposited in the church, and among those a twisted brass serpent, supposed of the desert.

The old part of this city is built in the ponderous style of the middle ages, surrounded by canals which communicate with various parts of Northern Italy; but the palaces and noble streets of the modern quarter will bear a comparison with those of any other European city. There is an air of comfort about the houses not always to be met with in Italy, and the streets are well paved and kept clean.

The Austrians are most cordially disliked in their Italian dominions. But how can it be otherwise, while they impoverish their subjects by exorbitant taxes for the support of a large army of occupation, and when there is so very great a difference in the physical temperament of the Italians from that of the people to whose dominion they are subjected? The Italian States pay about 40,000,000 francs yearly to Austria. The tax on land and tangible property is the heaviest; and the extra taxes

(sopra imposte) fall without mercy on proprietors.

The clothing and appointments of the army are of German manufacture paid for in Italian taxes; and the country is overstocked with the clumsy, ill made wares of Austria.

The élite of the Emperor's army is spread over Italy. In every quarter of the city troops are under arms, and parks of artillery line the squares; 500 muskets are turned out in the city after sunset, and the avenues to it are protected by a corps of gens-d'armes. Such is the vigilant military system of a despotic power which has already given the death-blow to secret associations, and continues to hold a great portion of Italy in the most abject state of submission.

Notwithstanding all their taxes, the Milanese are a thriving people, and they carry on a considerable trade by means of canals supplied from the rivers Ada and Tecino on each side of the city. Their staple commodities are grain, — particularly rice, — cheese, raw silk, and cattle; and they have manufactures of woollen and linen cloths, velvet and silk, embroidery and jewellery.

I have met with a party of three gentlemen who have agreed with a vetturino to leave this place to-morrow morning for Bologna. The vacant corner of the carriage has been taken by your humble servant; and Monsieur D——t, the great flute-player, one of the travelling quartet, has bargained with the vetturino to convey me to Florence in five days, including supper and bed, for eighty-four francs.

LETTER VI.

Journey with a Vetturino from Milan to Bologna, through Parma.—Corregio's Fresco.

Bologna, 27th April, 1824.

Fortunately the weather is now settled, temperate, and exhilarating. At Milan I was glad to give up posting with the courier, as the country, which I came to see, is thus passed over too quickly, besides its being more fatiguing and expensive than my present mode of conveyance.

When a traveller is not limited for time, and considers economy an object, he should place himself in charge of a respectable vetturino, who will transport him with his baggage any distance in a close or an open carriage at the rate of about thirty miles a day, a supper and bed being provided at each stage for a stipulated sum. The vetturini are, however, too apt to take advantage of a stranger's ignorance of

the usual charges. It is, therefore, best to get some Italian gentleman to make the bargain in any case, which will effect a saving of perhaps a third.

On the 24th instant, at an early hour, I left Milan, in an old-fashioned, roomy carriage, with a pleasant party consisting of Mr. D——t, a young student, and a Roman priest. The plains of the Milanese are monotonously flat, but highly productive in grain, pasture, and rice; and, for the latter crops, the fields are well irrigated by extensive canals. But the abundance of that district ill accords with the poverty of the cultivators and wretched appearance of the emaciated peasants who are to be seen lounging about their houses as a traveller passes.

At Lodi we rested two hours. In was in this place where Napoleon established his reputation for cool courage "even at the cannon's mouth." On our way hither, nothing could exceed the luxuriance of the fields or the pleasant appearance of the vines, which are planted in a succession of lines or squares, led in graceful festoons from one elm tree to another. Italian proprietors are fond of a town life; and the

rents of their lands are paid generally by the farmer in a half of the actual produce.

On the second day we quitted the imperial dominions, and soon entered the duchy of Parma, after crossing the river Po at Piacenza in a very antediluvian sort of barge. We passed through the town without making any halt, and in a short time the vettura was rolling over the ancient via Flaminia.

At sunset our driver stopped for the night at borgo St. Donino, on the river Stirone. Here there are a cathedral and college, which formerly belonged to the Jesuits, who were the most learned, crafty, and dangerous men, when their order was tolerated, although a very small number of them now exist in Italy.

Early on the following morning we saw the dreary ruin of Castel Guelfo, so celebrated in the contests between the Guelphs and Ghibellines and by writers of romance. Its situation on the torrent of the Taro is beautifully romantic, and the surrounding rich country is interspersed with many pretty villages and villas on the most picturesque heights. The irregular forms of the Apennines are now distinctly seen

in the back ground; but how diminutive they appear after Switzerland and the Alps!

At sunrise there was a charming, yet very singular effect produced by a vapour issuing from the fields of this humid district, which by degrees became so attenuated, as to have an appearance of the finest gauze between the eye and the scenery, not far from the road, which was illuminated by the sun's early rays. The full blaze of his beams at length absorbed this natural transparent curtain which gave so remarkable an appearance to the landscape, and the extensive blushing valley of the Taro was revealed in all its distinctness of feature, as by a sort of enchantment. There is an elegant stone bridge lately erected over the Taro, by the Duchy of Parma; it is one of the very finest in Italy. The Taro when we crossed was low, and divided into different small streams. On its banks are some fine pastures, and many villas. The latter are however rather naked and deficient in several of those rural charms with which Nature and Art embellish the mansions of the rich in England.

Our vetturino could not be persuaded to stop

at Parma; I therefore quitted the carriage, in order to have a passing glance at the rich, sublime frescos of Corregio. The cathedral which contains his work in fresco of the Assumption of the Virgin, is Gothic. It has a very rude exterior, which is darkened, and mouldering with age. The great production which adorns the interior of the cupola is unrivalled. It is noble in design, and full of the most natural and graceful combinations. The Virgin Mary is seen ascending into Heaven; numerous angels surrounding her seem to be uplifted among genial skies; and the apostles and saints in the foreground appear endued with feeling, and projecting from the walls of the cupola. Such are the magical effects produced from Corregio's exquisite knowledge of motion, attitude, skilful management in the composition, and the most profound intimacy with colours, toning, and chiaro-scuro. Nothing in art can be more grateful either to the eye or the mind, than the exquisite harmony and tenderness of Corregio's works. The pleasure I felt in viewing that artist's unrivalled fresco, was not unmixed with regret, as the damps of

ages have made a severe encroachment on its splendid tints. On the roof of the cathedral are compartments containing the figures of saints, &c., and on the walls are various subjects from the Bible, some of which are from the graceful pencil of Mazzuolo. You may imagine my regret in having no time to visit the Academy of Arts and Sciences,—rich in the works of Corregio, Schidone, and Annibale Caracci; but every traveller who can find leisure should examine this collection. Parma has an extremely venerable appearance. Its numerous churches and dreary palaces are hastening to decay.

After leaving Parma, I soon overtook the vetturino, who had halted to feed his horses. To avoid the visits of custom-house officers we passed on the outside of Reggio. In these piping times of peace the branches of the vine hang over its ramparts, where the cannon formerly bade defiance to an enemy.

At Versel, on the 26th, we put up for the night; and as the weather was very inviting, we all took a long stroll in the neighbourhood before supper: the nightingale delighted us by

its plaintive warbling, while our star-lighted path was bespangled with thousands of fire-flies.

Early on the following day we reached Modena, which has a more elegant appearance than Parma, although I should infinitely prefer the latter as a residence. Many of the streets are lined with arcades, which afford a protection to pedestrians against the heat or rain. The Ducal Palace is a noble edifice, in a handsome park open to the public. Corregio's celebrated picture of La Notte once adorned its interior, but it has been long since sold, together with some choice treasures of art.

On quitting the town, we crossed the Panaro, over a handsome bridge. There the fields had the appearance of improved cultivation, and the scenery assumed a more varied and picturesque aspect by the closer approach to the Apennines. At every step one beholds the very landscapes and back-grounds so beautifully painted by the old masters; and I saw them lighted up in that season when all nature is fresh, blooming, and young.

The via Emilia runs through this fine part of the country, where the ancient Romans had

many struggles for expiring liberty. We now passed through a well cultivated country, graced with villas, trim farm-houses, and gardens,—interspersed with rising grounds, crowned with villages, vineyards, and an occasional convent.

Shortly after passing the Rena, we entered this city, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

LETTER VII.

Bologna. — Streets. — Towers. — Churches. — Principal Square.—Shops.—Fountain of Neptune.

BOLOGNA, 11 o'cl. P.M., 27th April, 1824.

I SIT down at this late hour, although much fatigued, to give you a short account of what little I have seen of this place since our arrival at three o'clock in the afternoon. In the first place, to my great mortification, I found the picture-galleries, palaces, &c., all closed, which I shall not at present have an opportunity of seeing, as our vetturino will start at daybreak tomorrow for Florence. I am therefore obliged to make up my mind to pass through Bologna without viewing the Academy, in which are preserved some admirable specimens of the three Caracci, and their pupils, Guido Rheni, Albano, and Domenichino.

The baggage being deposited at the hotel of the Three Moors, where we lodge for the night, I walked through the principal parts of the town, and visited several churches. The streets are narrow, but kept in good order; and many of them are erected on arcades and piazzas, which give rather a gloomy aspect to the town. They however afford an excellent protection against both heat and rain, as a pedestrian may be almost constantly under cover while perambulating in any quarter of the city.

There are no less than twelve gates in Bologna, and the vistas of arcades leading to them have a pleasing effect. The two towers of Asinelli and Garrisendi are strange, gloomy piles. The first is 400 feet and the other 140 feet in height. The latter diverges no less than eight feet from the perpendicular. It appears to be absolutely tumbling, but has retained a threatening position for ages, and is likely to stand as long as the most erect piece of mason-work in the city. These mis-shapen masses are celebrated in the Inferno of Dante, and have thus become classical objects.

Among the churches, that of St. Petronio ap-

pears to be the principal one. It stands not far from the celebrated Fountain of Neptune. Its external appearance is rough and unfinished, but the interior is lofty, finely proportioned, and well ventilated. On the pavement is traced a meridian line, 219 feet in length, which was arranged by the astronomer Cassini; and it serves to regulate the hours with the utmost correctness.

The principal square fronts this church, and presents some curious, old, picturesque masses of building, filled with coffee-houses and shops. It also is used as a market, where booths are placed for the sale of a great variety of eatables and other articles. Many of the cheesemongers would even startle a London alderman with the piles of fat, savoury eatables ranged in tempting succession round their crowded shops. Their doors are flanked by huge Parmesan cheeses, baskets of macaroni, &c.; while the windows are stored with rolls of Bologna sausages of an unusual size, hams, and truffles.

The image of the Blessed Virgin is to be seen in many of these bottege peeping out of the sausage mountains; and in the wine-cellar, too,

she is placed, with a small lamp lighted in front; near the jolly, profane Bacchus astride on his butt.

About the centre of this square (Piazza del Gigante) is placed a bronze colossal statue of Neptune over a fountain, surrounded by the Nereids pressing their breasts, cupids sporting with dolphins, &c. The whole is the work of Giovanni di Bologna, and presents a very strange jumble, although it is admirably executed.

I took a glance at the cathedral, which is a clumsy, ill-planned pile. The sanctuary contains Ludovico Carracci's fresco picture of the Annunciation; and in another part of the church is his Saint Peter and the Virgin, a work highly esteemed. The side pavements are smooth, and of a curious appearance. They consist of small pieces of porphyry and stones of various colours placed in a sort of paste, which is polished after it is sufficiently hardened.

On returning to the hotel, I found the Roman priest had left our party, which we regretted, as he was an excellent compagnon de voyage. Although I felt much fatigued by the time that supper was ready, I contrived to do it ample

justice. Every thing about it was excellent and well served; and on the present occasion our vetturino gave universal satisfaction.

My fellow-travellers are now in bed; and as I am perfectly ready for mine, I must wish you a good night.

LETTER VIII.

Journey over the Apennines between Bologna and Florence. — Mountain Inn. — Carriers. — Approach to Florence.—Arrival.

FLORENCE, 30th April, 1824.

AT Bologna we found another vettura with three tolerable mules in readiness to convey us the remainder of the journey. It was an inferior equipage to the former, but I could not help admiring its picturesque appearance, which reminded me of the accessories sometimes introduced in Both's Italian landscapes. The driver was a sharp featured Tuscan, dressed in a curious fashion, and the gear of his mules was covered with small brass knobs, to which were appended a number of rusty, unmusical bells, and the badger's fur as a sort of spell against all evil doers or misfortune. The covetousness of the vetturino persuaded him to squeeze more passengers into our new vehicle

than it was ever intended to hold, and the journey was thus rendered infinitely more fatiguing. I was often induced during the ascent of the Apennines, to walk. Shortly after quitting Bologna, on the 28th at sunrise, I got into conversation with the Count Montanari, a fellow-traveller, whom I found to be a very frank, agreeable young man. We are now living at the same hotel, and the Count has shewn me many things that would otherwise have escaped notice. During the first day's journey we went over a succession of hills, and were occasionally assisted by yokes of oxen tackled in front of the mules, which are always ready at stated places to assist in dragging carriages over the most difficult ascents. The sterile, monotonous tracts of the dreary Apennines are almost deserted. There are only occasional miserable sheds to be seen, surrounded by patches of grass or grain, and at those places the toiling drivers of oxen are lodged with their cattle. On arriving at the mountain inn of Covigliano, it would be difficult to tell whether the ill treated mules that brought us there or ourselves were most jaded; and a more comfortless place for a weary traveller cannot

be easily imagined. After some delay, a wretched supper was placed on a greasy table-cloth, consisting of boiled rice fattened with pork, a roast of lean stringy goat's flesh, a ragout of ominous appearance and smell, badly cooked vegetables, and black bread. As general dissatisfaction was felt, we told the driver that no buona mano should be bestowed at parting. He instantly blamed the hostess, to whom he said he had written by the courier to provide every thing that was good. To try and make us some amends, he ordered the servant to produce several bottles of excellent Muscat wine from a supply reserved for extraordinary occasions. I slept in a small closet where there was no want of air, it being liberally supplied through the broken window panes. The coarse sheets on the bed had already covered many weary travellers since they were washed. Under these circumstances I hesitated about going to bed, but fatigue overcame my scruples, and I lay down on the bed in a cloak. Awaking at a very early hour by no means refreshed, I walked to a small convent in the neighbourhood, where I saw the sun rise on one of the bleakest scenes of fair Italy. Still the

refulgence of the new-born day is in itself a sublime object,—a constantly moving and varied picture, which gladdens us with its powerful influence in every situation.

Shortly after quitting the wretched inn of Covigliano, we descended into a fine open country, passing many Tuscan carriers, whose carts were freighted with various merchandize and wine in odd-looking long narrow barrels. Their mules were handsome and strong. The people of this country have a different method of yoking their animals from the English, as little or no weight is borne by the shaft horse or mule. The shafts of the cart, instead of being horizontal, are attached to each side of a raised saddle on the horse's back, thereby throwing the weight off the animal which drags it.

My anticipations of the charming approach to Florence were more than realized. The undulating slopes of carefully cultivated hills descending to the luxuriant valley of the Arno, are covered with the products of a warm, equal climate. The pale delicate olive trees and vineyards gradually closed round us as we descended towards the Italian Athens. Villas and

villages occupy hill and dale, with intervening groves where the stately cypress rears its dark form among the broad masses of oak and chestnut-trees. Florence is built on both sides of the Arno, connected by two fine stone bridges. The weather being extremely clear, the city was most distinctly seen at many miles' distance, with its vast cathedral crowned with a magnificent dome, surrounded by the ponderous palaces of the middle ages, winding narrow streets, piazzas, and many churches; while more to the right, on the opposite banks of the shining Arno, the massive pile of the Pitti palace rears itself among the richly wooded, flowery gardens of Boboli. For many miles around, the country is studded with villages filled with a dense, industrious population, whose occupations are dependent on the numerous wants of one of the finest and most thriving cities in Italy. On entering the town I could not help being much struck with the gay and happy looks of the peasants who were lounging about the streets. They are remarkably clean, and becomingly attired. The young women are of a small stature, round, and well shaped. They wear corsets, laced over clean

linen, and round black hats covered with dark plumes; while the men have the jacket, wide breeches, sandals, and a band round the body.

The Count Montanari brought me to an excellent hotel, called the Black Eagle, in the Borgo d'ognisanti, where I am well lodged on moderate terms. It is newly fitted up; the rooms are lofty, handsomely painted, and well aired. The situation, too, is pleasant and convenient, being in the vicinity of the Arno, and not far from the Imperial Gallery, Pitti Palace, and the fertile valley below the city. My landlord, Joseph Balzani, seems to be an honest, good-humoured fellow; and as his printed card is rather a curious production, I subjoin it for your amusement. "Inn of the rlack Eagle in Florence. All sorts of voitures for citty and for all Europe are found in it, larges and small appartements furnished after very elegant taste are there. The strangers are served at round or private table at very moderate price."

LETTER IX.

Streets.—Buildings.—Walks.—Squares.—Markets.—An Improvisatore.

FLORENCE, 2d May, 1824.

AFTER my first walk through this city, I confess I was disappointed in its general appearance. The promenades on the Arno, and one or two of the great squares, may be excepted, as they are noble and striking. The general aspect of the buildings is of a gloomy, heavy description, which is heightened by the narrow, winding streets. They run into each other in a perplexing manner; and a stranger has considerable difficulty in threading his way amidst their sinuous bearings.

Michael Angelo introduced into this his native city much of that severe style of architecture which characterizes it, but amidst such stormy and bloody times as compelled the natives to convert their dwellings into places of defence

against fierce and sanguinary hirelings, or the unnatural factions of ambitious natives, whose sole delight was the ruin of each other and the destruction of their fine country. Their situation is now most strikingly reversed. The country is full of industry, thriving in the midst of profound peace, under a government remarkable for its extreme mildness and popularity: and the refinement of the Florentines is considerable, as might be supposed, from the present state of their schools, libraries, noble galleries of art, and places of public amusement.

The streets are paved in a curious manner, with large, hard, round stones; but there is no raised way for pedestrians. This city can boast of a variety of delightful promenades, which at this inviting season are crowded in the latter part of the day. The spacious quays along the Arno are then filled with fashionable equipages and loungers of every class; as are also the winding avenues of the Poggio Imperiale, where the oak and vine vie with each other in lending shade to the walks under their deep green canopy. Along the clear stream of the Arno there is a delicious rural drive to the park and gardens of the Casino, or Royal Farm,

which lies close to the city. There the umbrageous elm and mulberry trees form a noble protection from the sun's scorching rays in summer, and in the cool of the evening the walks are resorted to by all classes. On Sunday they have a gay appearance, as the peasantry in their best attire join the lively throng of the city. From one part of the grounds a charming view of Fiesole is obtained, on the south slope of the Apennines.

The principal public squares consist of buildings of a varied description, with an open space in the centre, sometimes used for a variety of purposes; and a statue, pillar, or fountain of attractive beauty is almost always to be found in each of them. The most spacious square is that of the Grand Duke, on one side of which is a part of the old palace. On another side of it, under the arcade styled Loggia dei Lanzi, is a fine bronze group of Perseus with the head of Medusa, the work of Benvenuto Cellini, supposed to be his masterpiece. The air of Perseus is truly godlike, and the heathen deities on the pedestal are finely executed. It is to be regretted that the hand that produced such a work should ever have been employed on

costly gewgaws for royalty and the church; and the extraordinary monopoly of poor Cellini's valuable time by the ducal family is strikingly illustrated in his life written by himself. Near Cellini's group is an equally celebrated sculpture of the Rape of a Sabine, by John of Bologna; it is full of spirit and effect. The vigour of the youth tearing a virgin from the arms of her father, is finely contrasted with the aged man thrown down and clinging to the ravisher, and the struggle of the female to escape, is energetic and beautiful.

The most remarkable fountain in Florence ornaments this frequented square. It is by Ammanati, and represents a colossal figure of Neptune in his car, drawn by the horses of the deep, while the god is supported by sea-monsters blowing shells, from which water falls into the basin underneath; and surrounded by satyrs. Neptune appears very passive, and the arms hang down on each side in an unmeaning manner; but his figure is muscular and commanding when contrasted with the accompanying puny attendants.

This square appears to be a rendezvous for all kinds of company. When I passed through

it, I could scarcely make way through the crowd that surrounded two loquacious quack doctors, seated on horses which seemed as much fixed to the spot as Neptune himself. These sons of Æsculapius held printed papers, from which they vociferated that they were the only persons capable of curing every disease, and offered a variety of valuable advice. At other places were improvisatori, who held forth in animated measures to the gaping throng, while a number of itinerant pedlars were not idle in the praise of their small ware.

The prominent features of this square having been thus slightly alluded to, I may mention that of the Annunziata, built in more regular and recent taste, surrounded by arcades, with a striking equestrian statue of Duke Ferdinand I. in its centre.

In the old market there is a fountain decorated by a finely executed bronze of a wild boar. The small square of the new market contains no other remarkable object except a pretty granite column crowned by the figure of Abundance.

On the way homeward I took a passing glance at the cathedral, its accompanying grace-

ful campanile, and the celebrated bronze gates of the baptistry, all strikingly beautiful, but which will be more fully mentioned when they have been properly examined.

I afterwards passed through two of the markets for meat, poultry, vegetables, and fruit. In the former I witnessed several instances of cruelty towards the brute creation, and was particularly shocked at seeing several sheep so tightly tied by the four legs as to produce blood, while they lay panting in the torture occasioned by their situation. The markets are such disagreeable places—so thoroughly offensive to sight and smell—that I shall carefully avoid them in future rambles.

I had scarcely entered the hotel, when an improvisatore, who was standing in the passage, presented an ode in which my name was inserted. He said it was a welcome to Florence, written expressly for my arrival. Ode-making, you must know, is a sort of trade here. The humble rhyme-stringers watch the coming of travellers, who are furnished with verses which might be all set to the same tune. A small fee is expected on the occasion by the poetaster, who is generally easily satisfied.

LETTER X.

The Duómo.—Campanile.—Baptistry and its Bronze Gates.—Santissima Annunziata.—Santa Croce.—Monuments.

FLORENCE, 11th May, 1824.

DURING the day the weather is now as warm as it ever is in England at Midsummer; but a stranger gets on pretty comfortably, in seeing the lions of Florence, by the streets being kept tolerably cool by their narrowness, and the comparatively high buildings with deep projecting cornices casting a constant shade on the pavement.

In a Catholic country the churches are always a striking feature of both city and village; and as I have seen the principal churches of Florence, I shall endeavour to give you some idea of them.

My first visit was to the cathedral, which is in a spacious square. This building has an im-

posing exterior, and was commenced by Arnolfo Lapo in 1296. After his death, Giotto was appointed its architect. The grand double cupola, the plan of Brunelleschi, was finished by him in the year 1426. It is a magnificent work, and was exceedingly admired by Michael Angelo, who declared it could not be surpassed. Its dimensions are nearly equal to the dome of St. Peter's, of which it is the acknowledged prototype. The church is divided into a nave and two aisles, running into a cross and tribune, and terminates in an octagon. The front entrance, which has three gates, is of Gothic architecture; but the remaining sides are encased with squares of black and white marble, and a number of statues are ranged on the roof. The swelling dome rises 380 feet from the ground, and is equally grand whether seen from the square or from a distance, as it proudly soars above every other object. The interior is rather naked and indifferently lighted, and disappoints by an absence of corresponding grandeur. The superb cupola must, however, be excepted, which is a triumph of art. Underneath the dome is a covered choir, surrounded by Ionic pil-

lars; and the recesses of the side aisles are fitted up as chapels, decorated with rare marble of various colours, mosaics, pictures, &c. Small windows of stained glass, at the bottom of the dark dome, admit a poor, dim light, and the paintings of the chapels are scarcely visible. Some dull colossal statues, of Bandinelli, are placed in the choir and aisles. Among those is one of the Supreme Being seated upon a throne, which, to the feelings of a Protestant, savours somewhat of idolatry. The Pietà of Michael Angelo stands behind the altar. It is a rough sketch. The head of the dead Christ, supported by the Virgin in her arms, is grand and natural. The remainder of the group is so fine as to cause regret only at its being unfinished.

I attended mass at this church, where the nobles of the land were mixed with the lowly; but although the crowd which was present would have filled two ordinary churches, it appeared as nothing in this vast edifice. At the extremity of the cross there is a good deal of light admitted through the open doors, which only serves to shew the nakedness of that part of the church; but the mosaic pavement is truly beautiful, and has the appearance of a rich carpet.

The campanile, or belfry, detached a few paces from the cathedral, is a light, elegant structure of 288 feet in height, faced with a variety of marble in small polished pieces exquisitely arranged. It was built after the design of Giotto, the painter; and although very nearly five centuries have elapsed since the erection, it is in a fine condition.

The baptistry stands opposite the front of the cathedral. Its form is an octagon, of a heavy appearance, with a low dome resting upon granite columns. The great attraction of the baptistry is in its bronze gates, of the most exquisite workmanship, which Michael Angelo enthusiastically pronounced to be worthy to be the gates of Paradise. There are three lofty and ponderous portals to the baptistry, divided into a number of compartments worked into high relief.

The designs, which comprise the prominent events of the life of St. John the Baptist, are noble, and charmingly executed. The arrangement of the various groups, their feeling and their draperies, are quite admirable. The borders, also, of flowers, fruit, and birds fluttering among the leaves, are carved with much fidelity and beauty.

The most ancient of these gates is by Andrea Pisano; and the date inscribed on it is 1330. The remaining two are from the skilful hands of Lorenzo Ghiberti.

The interior of this building is prettily arranged. An elegant mosaic pavement, several fine statues, two pillars of porphyry, shrines dazzling with jewels, are the conspicuous decorations. Around the font, a small party of men, women and children were standing, while a priest was in the act of baptizing an infant—that rite to which the building has been appropriated. The tender solicitude of the parents formed a striking contrast to the cold, mechanical bearing of the priest.

The Piazza del Duomo is a favourite resort in the evening, where there are some of the best coffee-houses in the city. The great and illustrious of former times also frequented it, and the seats of Machiavelli and Dante are yet pointed out to the curious stranger.

The church of Santissima Annunziata, which is of small dimensions, is very ancient and splendid. The chapel of the Soccorso is adorned with a magnificence worthier of the Duomo. It contains a golden lamp, besides silver lamps, candlesticks, and jewels, which form a curious

contrast to the tawdry dress of the Blessed Virgin.

It is a disgrace to the Catholic Church, that so many vile daubs and dirty votive offerings are permitted to offend the eye at every step in the noblest sanctuaries. This every Protestant must feel while examining many of the Papal churches in Italy.

The best sculpture is Bandinelli's Dead Christ on the knees of the Father, which is a skilful and an admirable work.

In the corridor fronting the church, the genius of Andrea del Sarto is very conspicuous, by the beauty of several frescos, which are too good for such a situation. The best is the Madonna del Sacco, so much admired for the extreme simplicity and elegance of its composition. It has been well engraved by Raphael Morghen.

I shall now conduct you to Santa Croce, the Pantheon of Florence; for

> "here repose
> Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
> The starry Galileo, with his woes;
> Here Machiavelli's earth, return'd to whence it rose."*

* Byron.

Here there is another instance of an unfinished exterior. It was erected after the designs of Arnolfo Lapo, and is coeval with the Duomo. The internal arrangement is remarkable for its space and agreeable simplicity. It is composed of three aisles; and the carved Gothic roof adds considerably to its venerable aspect. A few fine pictures adorn its dark walls. The Assumption of the Virgin, by Allori, is a production of great merit, although the composition is rather crowded. The Deposition from the Cross, by Cigoli—our Saviour received into the arms of the Heavenly Father, attended by angels:—the composition is simple and natural, and the colouring is managed with skill.

Near the principal entrance, on the right, is the monument to the memory of Michael Angelo. It is of a pyramidal form, with his bust above three figures emblematical of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture—those great arts in which he so remarkably excelled.

We are told, that when Florence lost its liberty, Michael Angelo fled to Rome, where he died; and that his bones were brought here, by his degraded countrymen, where they are consecrated in their mother earth.

In the opposite aisle there is a monument raised to the philosophic Galileo. His bust is fixed on a sarcophagus, supported by two figures emblematical of Astronomy and Geometry. This great man, who declared that the earth moves round the sun, and who was the inventor of the telescope, led a life of persecution: proscribed as a heretic, he died in exile, blind and poor.

The two remaining monuments which I shall now mention, are over the ashes of Machiavelli and Alfieri. In the first there is a figure, the emblem of History and Politics, reclining on his sarcophagus. The splendid genius of Canova, who was Alfieri's personal friend, has been employed on that of the latter. It is a draped figure of Italy, in tears, pointing to the portrait of the Poet, and is graceful and dignified.

At the church of the Carmelites, on the opposite side of the Arno, I have seen an admirable fresco of Masacchio upon the walls of one of the altars. This is, I believe, the only remnant of a series destroyed by a fire, which were said to be the admiration and study of Raphael and Michael Angelo.

To-morrow I am to meet Mr. Ombrosi, the American Consul, who has promised to accompany me to see the church of San Lorenzo and the Laurentian library.

LETTER XI.

San Lorenzo. — Michael Angelo's Statues.—Laurentian Library. — Raphael Morghen. — Imperial Gallery. — Opera.—Velluti.

FLORENCE, 7th May, 1824.

SINCE my last letter I have been chiefly occupied in examining the splendid galleries of painting and sculpture at the National Establishment and the Pitti Palace. With Mr. Ombrosi and some of his American friends, I have felt considerable pleasure; and the time passes on very agreeably in their society or in that of Count Montanari, who is still here.

To conclude my notice of the churches, I must now say something of San Lorenzo. It is as old as the Duomo, and the same architect was employed on both churches*. The design of the interior is simple and agreeable; but my

* Brunelleschi who raised the cupola of the cathedral, gave a design for rebuilding San Lorenzo, in 1425, after the latter was destroyed by fire.

attention was chiefly engrossed by the two pulpits, which are richly carved in wood. Michael Angelo designed the cemetery of the Medici attached to this church, which claims the most particular notice, from its possessing some celebrated sculptures of that great artist. It is necessary to see these works to have a proper conception of Michael Angelo's extraordinary powers as a sculptor. Some of these figures are quite unfinished, although they are placed as destined by the proud family of the Medici.

The statue of Lorenzo de' Medici, seated, is truly noble. He is habited as a warrior, in a meditative mood, with his face leaning on the left hand, which is in deep shade under a projecting helmet. A sarcophagus underneath contains his ashes, with a male and female figure reclining over it, emblematical of Morning and Twilight. The Dawn is represented by a female of admirable proportions. The countenance is thoughtful, and the drapery, falling in bold folds from the head-dress, is finely composed. Twilight is a superb figure of a powerful man reclining and looking downwards. The head is unfinished; but the right limb, which is finished, is a chef d'œuvre.

Opposite is a statue of Giuliano de' Medici, seated, looking towards the left, with a truncheon in his hands. On the sarcophagus below are recumbent figures, as Day and Night. The emblem of Day is a sbozzo, but the conception is exceedingly grand. The figure is recumbent, and in an attitude so noble and difficult, as no man but Michael Angelo could have attempted. The upper part of the face just seen over the right shoulder, is extremely striking; but here we are again left to regret the unfinished state of the head. That of Night is a female in profound sleep, with the head and limbs drooping. An owl is introduced, but in a very strange situation.

The Virgin and Child, by the same great artist, is also unfinished. The head of the Child and right arm resting on the Virgin's bosom, are full of nature.

From this cemetery we were conducted to a gorgeous chapel adjoining the Church of San Lorenzo, begun in 1604, by Ferdinando I., from his own design. It is a species of tower, 200 feet in height. The cupola and other parts are still in a rough state, although a great portion of the building is so elaborately finished, as to exceed

all that the most inventive fancy can imagine. Oriental granite, porphyry, lapis lazuli, the rarest marbles, and most precious stones, have been fashioned into every shape for the embellishment of this additional church. Its splendour, however, is a folly, and accords ill with the poverty of the Government.

Our next visit was to the Laurentian Library, which is deposited in an ancient convent close to San Lorenzo. It was founded by the elder Cosimo, and reflects a lasting honour on the name of the Medici, who deposited amidst its archives many thousand rare manuscripts in the dead languages, collected at a vast trouble and expense; and from some of these have been printed several Greek and Latin classics, now in high estimation among the learned.

The designs of this library—the desks and curious presses—are by Michael Angelo, whose unbounded genius is to be seen in the soaring dome,—the pictorial representations of the sublimest passages in Scripture,—sculpture of the highest order, down to the architecture of libraries, dwelling-houses, and mosaic pavements.

Owing to Mr. Ombrosi's exertions, I had access to many very rare manuscripts. The first

we examined was of Virgil, which is on vellum, of an octavo size, done in the year 200; and we afterwards saw, in succession, the Bible in the hand-writing of a monk, with his annotations previous to printing,—an illuminated missal, containing miniatures, &c.,—works of Terence, Dante, Petrarch, and many other writers. As we were departing, an old guardiano produced a phial, in which there was a preserved finger; and he assured us it was no other than of Galileo, cut from the hand immediately after his death.

Having expressed a wish to visit the celebrated Raphael Morghen's establishment, Mr. Ombrosi took me to his house on our return. Morghen received us with great civility, and accompanied us through several rooms. He is a little man, with a keen eye, but advanced in years, and beginning to feel the effects of an irregular course of life. Although a Neapolitan by birth, he railed against his countrymen, for their want of taste in the arts. In his studio I was much pleased with an admirable chalk drawing of Da Vinci's Last Supper, and with some brilliant proof impressions of Morghen's principal engravings.

Morghen is a great admirer of Woollet's works. Several of these adorn his walls, and among the number I observed the Fishery, and a noble landscape after Claude. He also spoke very highly of Sharpe and Flaxman, particularly the latter, of whose genius he seems to be a most ardent admirer.

I have, as you may well imagine, derived the highest gratification from several visits to the Imperial Gallery, but it is not my purpose to enter into any detail in this letter of its numerous treasures of art.

The excellent arrangements of this extensive collection, and the many facilities afforded to visitors, reflect great credit on its management. The gallery comprises the upper apartments of a palace which covers two sides of a street, with its front to the Arno. Its vestibule is filled with marble busts of the founders and protectors of this celebrated establishment; the corridor is lined with a series of the more ancient and little known paintings of what might be termed the dark ages of art, which, I must confess, afforded me no compensation for the time lost in their examination.

The various rooms are crowded with pic-

tures, statues, bronzes, drawings, gems, vases, &c. The number of the rooms may be twenty, some of which are very spacious and richly decorated. The pictures are arranged in different schools; and the statues, bronzes, &c., are also classed; but the room called the Tribune contains the most precious objects, among which the breathing marble goddess of love is the superlative attraction!

This gallery in miniature is in shape of an octagon, lighted by a cupola, with a rich mosaic pavement. The Venus de' Medici stands in the centre. Her charms can be thus seen from every point of view, and chairs are placed round the statue for that purpose.

The fine sculpture of the young Apollo, with several celebrated antiques, are disposed round the Venus; and the walls are covered with some pictures of a very high class.

It cannot, however, be denied, that this collection is swelled by the most heterogeneous specimens. More than the moiety of the pictures ought to be cleared away as being unworthy of the space they occupy, and to prevent the possibility of the public taste becoming

vitiated by misnamed productions of particular schools.

Our friend Mr. Williams has made many valuable observations on the arts in Italy in his published Letters, although in some instances he has perhaps bestowed more praise on the above collection than it deserves.

The servants who shew the gallery are strictly forbidden to take money from strangers. Every apartment is locked, but a certain number of the keepers are constantly employed in shewing each in succession. They are very civil, and never trouble visitors with flippant observations.

It is quite lamentable to behold the degeneracy and decay of the Italians. When one reflects that Tuscany produced such men as Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo, it is painful to witness the daubers who now earn a scanty living by their bad copies of the old masters, which they contrive to sell to travellers possessed of more money than taste.

After poring over picture galleries, I find the Italian Opera very regaling, and its cheapness is a considerable recommendation. The pit ad-

mission is but three Tuscan Pauls, (1*s.* 4*d.*,) and even cheaper when a place is hired by the month. Three principal singers of celebrity are always engaged, the orchestra is very excellent, and the corps de ballet is filled with a great deal of native talent. The opera house of la Pergola is a pleasant, commodious theatre, but is so scanty of light as to deserve no other appellation than darkness visible. Velluti, the celebrated soprano, is singing at this theatre, and Lord Burghersh, our ambassador, is one of his patrons and great admirers. Velluti's taste and finished execution are undeniably exquisite, but the pleasure which his unnaturally clear tones afforded my ears was at the same moment combined with disgust. The ballet is generally founded on some interesting history or remarkable event, and the pantomime as well as the dancing are admirably executed.

The Italians appear to be peculiarly devoted to their own music. Mozart's beautiful operas are never performed, although they abound in melody, concerted passages, and rich modulation, to which the vocal talent of this country seems to be so admirably fitted to give the true effect.

LETTER XII.

Imperial Gallery.—Remarks on the Pictures.—Venus de' Medici, &c.—Mozzi Palace.—Its Collection.

FLORENCE, 11th May, 1824.

IT now remains for me to attempt some description of the works of art in the Imperial Gallery. The corridors of the building are covered with the specimens of early painters in regular series, which commence with gilded pictures of Greek artists. If they are genuine, we moderns have much reason to congratulate ourselves on our surpassing excellence in the art; but I cannot help being sceptical on the subject.

A number of antique busts arranged in chronological order, and statues, line the corridors which extend round the palace. The objects are too numerous to come within the compass of a letter, and I must refer you to the printed catalogue, wherein you will find a description

of the painted ceilings, sarcophagi, and statuary. The Laocoon (copied from the original at Rome) by Bandinelli, is a noble work.

The Empress Agrippina, as a Roman matron seated, combines dignity with ease.

A Bacchus by Michael Angelo is remarkable for the expression of inebriety. The rosy god holds a cup in one hand and grapes in the other, while a young satyr offers a bunch of grapes.

The Bacchus of Sansovino is also a very fine work. He has a goblet of wine which seems to inspire him with a vast deal of good humour.

Two statues of Venus, the Muses, and a Mercury, are works of much merit; but I must now conduct you to the Tribune, where I am rather impatient to offer a few remarks on works of art of a much higher order, a few of which have employed the pens of hundreds, and attracted the admiring gaze of thousands, from every civilized country.

The Venus de' Medici is the presiding goddess of this rich temple of the arts, and although I had seen numerous copies in marble, casts, drawings, and prints of this fine statue,

they all fall very short of the exquisite and indescribable beauties of the original. Whence do we derive the enchantment with which we gaze on this divine impersonation of female loveliness? In part, no doubt, from the beauty of the head and of every part of the form. But it is the happy union of the various parts, the flowing contour, and the coy attitude, that constitute the nameless charm which rivets the imagination. This precious sculpture is considered as the work of Cleomenes of Athens. The right arm, part of the left, and the hands are restorations, but they have been managed with considerable skill *. The Venus is surrounded by very choice company. The first in rank is the original statue of the young Apollo. It is in fine preservation, full of godlike composure and grace. Two wrestlers of noble forms, with a great display of muscle. The Fawn with a pair of cymbals in his hands. The head and arms were restored by Michael Angelo, but with such skill as to cause no regret. And lastly, a kneeling figure known by the names of the Spy and the Knife-whetter;

* This celebrated statue was found in the Villa Hadriana at Tivoli, and brought to Florence in 1689.

but be it what it may, the expression of the countenance is well wrought and very striking.

The walls of the Tribune are graced by four distinguished paintings of Raphael, besides specimens of Titian, Michael Angelo, Corregio, Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, Paul Veronese, Rubens, and Vandyk.

Raphael's Virgin with the infant Jesus upon her neck, holding out her hand to Saint John, is delightfully composed and highly finished. Saint John in the Wilderness is remarkable for the innocent expression of the face, but the colouring is of a disagreeable yellow tone. The portrait of la Fornarina is exquisitely painted, but as to intellect or beauty, I think it can boast of neither. His portrait of Pope Julius II. is of another description, the colouring being rich and deep, and the countenance fraught with intelligence.

The recumbent Venus of Titian, with flowers in her hand, is supposed to be a study from nature. There is a vulgarity about the figure which forms a striking contrast to the marble goddess of Cleomenes. The picture has been injured and retouched, yet the general effect is fine.

Michael Angelo's Holy Family is a hard, stiff production, painted in distemper, unworthy of himself. His vast genius and vigorous hand were impatient of any restraint. They required space for the true display of his sublime conceptions, of which we can form no adequate judgment, without seeing the fresco of the Last Day, the Prophets and Sibyls of the Vatican.

An upright picture of the Virgin and Child, with Angels, St. John, and St. Francis, by Andrea del Sarto, is finely composed, as well as most powerfully painted. It stands its ground, although hung between two of Titian's pictures.

There is a room for the portraits of celebrated painters of different countries. They amount to about 400, chiefly painted by themselves, many of which are exceedingly beautiful specimens of art, while others are mere sketches. It is a very unique and interesting collection.

In the Venetian school the following specimens leave a pleasing recollection.

St. Catherine chained; Paul Veronese. A delightful expression of countenance, and richly painted.

Portraits of the Duke of Urbino and his

Duchess; Titian. Admirable for truth of expression and splendid colouring. The expressive eyes of the Duke cannot fail to captivate those of every beholder, and his shining armour appears to rise from the canvass.

Sketch of a battle; Titian. Animation, force, freedom, and rich colouring are here happily combined.

Portrait of a female with flowers in her left hand; Titian. Beautiful, and in his best style.

A warrior's head; Sebastian del Piombo. Very characteristic.

Christ crucified; Paul Veronese. Many figures introduced with a skilful arrangement. Our Saviour's expression finely felt.

Portrait of a Knight of Malta; Giorgione. Full of expression and fine colouring.

A man in a black dress with auburn hair; Bordone. A clever portrait, and not unlike our celebrated Wilkie.

Marriage of Cana; Tintoretto. Many figures introduced with great skill; the perspective and colouring beautifully managed.

The Tuscan school can boast of some excellent pictures, among which are,—

The head of Medusa, with the hair changed into hissing serpents; Leonardo da Vinci. A highly finished painting. Its very perfection makes one turn from the subject in disgust.

An old man; Masaccio. Full of nature.

The infant Jesus asleep on the cross; Cristoforo Allori. Purity, repose, and harmony never were more happily blended than they are in this gem of art.

Judith with the head of Holofernes; Cristoforo Allori. Highly finished, and an excellent piece of colouring,

Jesus surrounded by the Apostles and the Marys; Carlo Dolci. Pleasing for its extreme beauty of finish.

The French school does not contain either a numerous or perhaps genuine collection.

In the Flemish school there is unaccountably placed a beautiful picture of Claude Lorraine's. It is a sea view, in which is introduced the villa Medicis, at Rome. The composition is noble, and the extreme brilliancy of the sun, which adds to its splendor, is quite dazzling.

There are some pleasing specimens in this room, but the greater number are surely copies.

The Dutch school has some clever pictures of

its best masters. As usual, they are chiefly pleasing for the faithful representations of familiar life and local scenes, and an admirable acquaintance with correct drawing, colouring, and effect.

Here are, however, many doubtful paintings, which serve to swell the collection, and cover the walls.

A large room is appropriated for a very interesting assemblage of statues, of the "Niobe and her family," consisting of six daughters and a like number of sons. They are reputed to be the production of Praxiteles; although some of the figures are of such an inferior merit, as to render any opinion on the subject a mere conjecture. Niobe herself is a statue in which the beau ideal strongly prevails. She is placed at the extremity of the hall, and the children are ranged on either side. The mother's agonizing situation in witnessing the destruction of her whole offspring is admirably conceived. Her youngest daughter clings to her for protection, while Apollo's unerring shafts, with those of Diana, are supposed to be spreading death among her other children. Fear, anguish, and despair have taken possession of these devoted objects of vengeance. The anatomy of the

dead son, and heavy appearance of the whole figure, are full of nature. It is perhaps the finest in the series, and universally admired.

There are some colossal busts in the same room. Those of Jupiter, Antinous, and Alexander, are particularly excellent.

The walls are graced by two pictures of Rubens, of the battle at Ivry, and entry of Henry the Fourth into Paris, after the victory. They are fine specimens of the master.

The room adjoining, is that of Baroccio, where is the St. Mary Magdalen of Carlo Dolci. Mary's eyes turned towards Heaven. Piety beautifully expressed, and the picture most carefully finished. The shadows are rather cold, and the back ground is too cutting. It has been engraved by R. Morghen.

There are four tables in this room of singularly fine workmanship, called Opera di Commesso. They are composed of a variety of rare marbles and gems, highly polished, manufactured in Florence.

In the cabinet of modern bronzes, Gio. di Bologna's Mercury is an invaluable ornament. The light-winged messenger of the gods is charmingly imagined, as about to fly from the

breath of a zephyr, which he lightly presses with one foot.

A bust of Cosimo I., Benvenuto Cellini, is beautifully executed, and full of animation.

I now conclude with the cabinet of gems and precious stones. It contains many truly elegant and costly articles in glazed cabinets. Upwards of 400 precious stones converted into figures, busts, vases, goblets, cups, &c., adorn this collection, some of which are from the laborious and skilful hands of Cellini.

Before closing this letter, I have to mention my visit to the Mozzi Palace, with Mr. Ombrosi. The following specimens struck me as being the best in its collection.

A head in fresco; Michael Angelo. Strong expression.

The Mount of Olives; Guido Rheni. A fine composition, but the back ground is disagreeably yellow.

Two battles of Radicofani and Perugia; Borgonone. Although sketchy, they are full of spirit and effect.

A large picture; Benvenuti, president of the Academy. The subject is the Saxons swearing to be faithful to Napoleon, by moonlight.

Napoleon is surrounded by his principal officers, and the Saxons stand opposite to them. An old man taking the oath of allegiance, is well painted. The principal light falls on Napoleon and his retinue, which is excellent.

You will now, I dare say, be satisfied for the present with pictorial descriptions. In my next I shall send some account of the Pitti Palace, the Museum, and the Boboli Gardens.

LETTER XIII.

Boboli Gardens.—Priesthood.—Pitti Palace.—The Grand Duke's Pictures.—Museum.—Institution of the Misericordia, &c.

FLORENCE, 13th May, 1824.

THE Pitti Palace, built in 1440, for Luca Pitti*, is now the residence of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and family. Although sufficiently spacious and commodious, it bears the ponderous stamp of a boisterous age, when every domicile was exposed to foreign aggression, or internal sedition. In front is a vacant space kept in very bad order, quite unlike the precincts of a palace; but such an incongruity excites no surprise, as splendour and neglect are so frequently found bordering upon each other in this country.

* This popular Florentine desiring to outshine the splendour of the Medici, whose growing power he opposed, commenced this huge pile, from the design of Brunelleschi; but Pitti was ruined before it could be completed.

The Boboli Gardens, attached to the palace, are of great extent, filled with delightful walks, where the citizens are allowed to recreate themselves.

Tuscany deserves to be styled the land of flowers, as their beauty and fragrance cannot be exceeded; and from that circumstance, is perhaps taken the ancient device of Florence, which is a lily among roses. The Boboli Gardens contain every species of native and exotic flowers, which are refreshed during extreme heat, by ample supplies of water from ornamental fountains. They exhibit a mixture of the various styles of gardening, but in the Italian mode little is left to nature, as by a perverse taste the trees are shorn of many of their natural beauties, while formal, straight avenues prevail.

The cooling fountains and colossal marble statues which abound in these grounds, are, however, highly ornamental and pleasing to the eye, where they remain uninjured under a genial climate.

The views from several elevated terraces and the higher walks are truly noble; where the city with its massy palaces and bridges,

its towering cupolas and shining spires, are seen surrounded by the rich vale of the Arno and the wild chain of the Apennines. Fiesole, at a few miles' distance, forms a fine feature in the landscape. It was once the retreat o Milton, where he communed with the Tuscan muses in its woody recesses, and to which he alludes in Paradise Lost.

I can imagine nothing more rich or beautiful than the evening sun of this brilliant climate shedding his rays on the varied tints of the Tuscan landscape, where the umbrageous chestnut, the far spreading oak, and the graceful dark pine, are contrasted with the pale, delicate, olive groves, and innumerable vineyards—besides old picturesque convents, villages, and spires, being mingled and thrown into those broad masses of light and shade which the artist loves to study and to imitate.

The valley of the Arno is divided into an infinity of small farms, being a scene of industry, competence, and happiness. All are there profitably employed, although the industrious peasants are drained by the poorer priests, strolling pilgrims and monks, who levy food and wine constantly at every dwelling.

The Catholic Church still holds a most arbitrary sway over the minds of the major portion of the people, in many parts of the continent. Its object seems to be to perpetuate ignorance, and by a specious artifice to instil that credulity and fear of the Church so predominant in the minds of the greater part of the Tuscans. The priesthood having consequently such entire sway over the minds of the multitude, no class, however poor, is excused from contributing to the necessitous of the church, and they exist in swarms throughout Italy.

I lately spent the best part of a day in examining the interior of the Pitti palace and its celebrated collection of pictures. The ducal family has repeatedly received tempting offers for its princely assortment of rare paintings. Much to its credit, they have been invariably rejected; and the palace is always open to the public several days in the week, when intelligent servants conduct strangers through the various halls and apartments allotted to the different works of art.

I shall now endeavour to give you some notion of those works which attracted my attention whilst ruminating among the crowd at

the palace.—The infant Christ and St. John; Titian. A man with some bullocks occupies the middle ground. Sheep in the distance. Is exquisitely painted, being replete with sentiment and fine colouring.

Titian's mistress; Titian. Splendid portrait, dressed in a figured blue silk gown ornamented with gold. The sleeves of a rich green colour. Portrait of a pope, and another of a man in a dark eastern costume. Both finely painted; Titian. The holy family; Guido. This is a round picture, and has been engraved.

Allegorical subject; Rubens. A landscape at sunrise, with peasants and horses in the foreground; Rubens. From an admirable knowledge of colour and effect, a great deal has been made of a meagre subject. The four philosophers, Portraits; Rubens. The Madonna della Seggiola; Raphael. A celebrated picture, but certainly not painted in his best manner. Portrait of Leo X.; Raphael. Two secretaries stand behind Leo. Dignity and nature could not be more happily combined than in this splendid specimen.

The Fates; Michael Angelo. They are

more mysterious and frightful than the witches in Macbeth.

A Holy Family; Carlo Dolci. Exquisitely finished, although the colouring wants concentration. The martyrdom of St. Agatha; Sebastian del Piombo. Two men are represented tearing the nipples from the breasts of a beautiful woman. A revolting spectacle, admirably painted.

A battle; Salvator Rosa. All the terrible confusion and horrors of the battle forcibly represented. A full length portrait of the Cardinal Bentivoglio, in his splendid Cardinal's robes, ornamented with lace. Vandyck. This is a magnificent picture, and has perhaps few compeers in portrait painting. The countenance beams with dignity and intelligence. The whole figure is full of character, and it is marvellously coloured. Canova's Venus is placed in a room surrounded with mirrors, for the reflection of her charms. She is represented as if shrinking from observation, after emerging from the bath, while some drapery has just been raised over the right breast by her left hand. Canova lived amidst the finest statues of ancient

times, and his whole mind was imbued with their perfection, which is very apparent in his Venus, as it has all the air of the antique. The ceilings of the principal rooms are covered with the fresco paintings of Pietro di Cortona and others; the floors are of oak, or a composition finely polished; and the furniture is French, rather simple, but in good taste. The duke's bed-chamber and bath are truly elegant. The latter is surrounded by marble figures, and a temple is placed in the centre, supported by four polished columns of verde antico. At a short distance from the palace, is the public museum, where there are galleries for mineralogy, natural history, a scientific library of 13,000 volumes, complicated anatomical preparations in wax; and rooms for public lectures.

The most striking feature in this establishment is the carefully finished wax models of anatomy. They are deposited in glass cases, and are close imitations of all the parts of the human body dissected. The natural colour and configuration of the skin, flesh, fat, muscles, blood-vessels, nerves, &c., are correctly imitated. Similar models might be valuable to English

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students of anatomy, who find it so difficult to procure dead bodies.

The Misericórdia is an establishment of long standing in different cities of Italy, although I have not had an opportunity of knowing the genuine benevolence and extreme utility which belong to this admirable institution, previous to my arrival at Florence. Its members are divided into three classes, with the Grand Duke at their head.

The grand objects of this society are to assist the poor, rescue the indigent and wretched, and to admit the friendless sick into an hospital where every comfort and medical aid await them.

The members of the order are always actively employed in conveying the sick to the hospital, nursing them while there with the most assiduous care, or watching the last struggle of mortality. The higher classes do not shrink from these humane offices, nor even from carrying the dead to the grave when their services may be deemed necessary.

During winter the soirées of Lord Burghersh I understand are extremely delightful. An ad-

mittance to them leads to other conversazioni, which are given by the leaders of fashion. A traveller, by being thus introduced, cannot fail to derive a vast deal of information, and enjoy some of those agrémens of life which are not to be found elsewhere. I am preparing for my departure to Rome, and my next will be dated within its sacred walls !

LETTER XIV.

Journey to Rome.—Siena.—Radicofani.—Aquapendente. —Basaltic columns.—Bolsena.—Peasantry.—Malaria.— Bad inns. — Montefiascone.—Viterbo.—Baccano.—The Campagna.—Porta del Popolo.—Arrival at Rome.—Walk to Saint Peter's.

ROME, 19th May, 1824.

BY far the most interesting and beautiful scenery betwixt Florence and Rome, is by the route of Arezzo, Perugia, Foligno, Spoleto, Terni, Narni, and Otricoli, so admirably described by Eustace, in his classical tour; but it was my fortune to travel by the way of Siena and Bolsena, which is less attractive, although it possesses many fine features.

I left Florence on the 14th, at mid-day. Shortly afterwards we passed some pretty cottages, occupied by women, whose sole employment consists in making straw bonnets—commonly called Leghorn, — for exportation. The country is beautifully varied by hill and

dale, covered with rocky eminences, ancient monasteries, and villages ;—surrounded by olive trees, vines, and cultivated fields. Our vettura arrived, towards nine P.M., at Poggibonzi, where the accommodations were indifferent.

On the 15th, before sun-rise, we were again on the road, and crossed some rugged steep hills, graced with villas and forest scenery. There was a detention of four hours at Siena. I had consequently time to examine this curious ancient city at leisure. It is built on a tufo hill. The streets are narrow; but they can boast of some spacious churches and excellent houses. There is a pretty marble fountain in the market-place, situated in a hollow, and approached by several flights of steps. The cathedral, which stands on an eminence, is a mixed gothic structure of the thirteenth century. There are three arched doors in front, with curious twisted marble pillars on each side, of party colours. The niches of carved gothic towers, at corresponding distances from the doors, are filled with statues; and finished bassi relievi of marble adorn the front. But the accompanying Campanile divests the cathedral of its unity of design, and

the lightness of the former has no affinity to the austere character of the gothic order. At the termination of the nave is a spacious dome. The pavement is a specimen of rare, elaborate workmanship, consisting of fine gray marbles, of various shades, on a white ground. It was invented by a Sienese artist upwards of a century after the erection of the church, and represents, with all the freedom of painting, many subjects of sacred history. Over the altar is a temple, surmounted by a figure of our Saviour in bronze, and angels of the same composition stand in front of the temple. At the other extremity of the cathedral, is a window composed of stained glass, representing the Last Supper. The marble pulpit and staircase are very elegantly designed, and of highly finished workmanship.

In Siena are to be found many traces of its former importance. It once contained 100,000 inhabitants, but cannot at present boast of one fifth of that number. The purest Tuscan is spoken here, and I have heard some Italians say, that the Sienese ladies discourse with such charming inflection as to be music itself to the delighted ear.

Although my knowledge of the Italian language is very slight, I could perceive a great difference between the pronunciation of the Milanese and Florentines. The latter have a disagreeable jargon, and pronounce C like a strongly aspirated H.

In consequence of our detention at Siena, we went only as far as the miserable osteria of Buon Convento, where we were housed for the night. It was necessary to pass through a small smoky kitchen to some steps which led to a dirty room, where supper was laid on a greasy table-cloth. Hungry as our little party felt after a weary fast, we loathed the meal, satisfying ourselves with some stale black bread, cheese, and inferior wine. The worst of it is, that the innkeepers at these pigsties for travellers between Florence and Rome, are often rapacious disobliging wretches, with no more feeling for the sojourner at their dens than for any bale which may be consigned to them. If any one complains of bad treatment, matters are often made worse, by total indifference to any of your wants, and the *maledizione* of master and servants at parting.

At four o'clock on the following morning we

emerged from our misery. The country as far as Radicofani is exceedingly barren. The naked rocks, which rise amidst the dreary wastes, are sometimes covered with villages, and a small flock of cows, sheep, or goats, occasionally enliven the prospect. From La Scala there was a severe pull for our jaded horses to the village of Radicofani, built on a barren hill, covered with immense blocks of basaltic rock. Its inhabitants are the most lifeless, woful beings that can be imagined. The last Tuscan custom house is on the hill near the village, where we were detained a very short time.

The fort of Radicofani, on the pinnacle of a mountain, has a very curious appearance. It hangs directly over the village, as if shaken by an earthquake, and ready to fall in pieces. At sunset the vetturino lodged our party at a dirty hovel, not far below the village. After we alighted I saw the cook kill two skinny fowls and a couple of pigeons, which were immediately cooked for supper. You may imagine the sight was not very encouraging. The vetturino fell under our immediate displeasure for bringing us to such a place. No one would touch the

badly cooked and dirty meal, so that after a good deal of wrangling, we were obliged to have recourse to black bread and vapid wine to satisfy our hunger, and at the same time we endeavoured to appease our anger, which was of no avail with the miscreants of the ill-provisioned tenement. The beds being intolerable, I stretched myself on a table in my cloak, but the fleas attacked me even in this position.

I have heard people complain of the accommodations in the highlands of Scotland; but I am now convinced that the most obscure clachan can boast of much greater comfort and civilization than can be found in the classical country between Florence and Rome.

Before day-break, I was obliged to rise from my hard resting-place to give ease to my bones, and to brush away the fleas, which still tormented me. Soon afterwards, the vettura being ready, we continued our journey with extra horses, through a rough, hilly district. The weather was delightful; and the scenery that opened upon us became extremely varied, and full of picturesque objects.

The town of Aquapendente stands in a sin-

gular situation. On the road leading to it is a curious collection of basaltic columns, which have five-sided prisms and upwards, and are about three feet high and six inches in diameter. The town is reared on a precipice, over a turbulent stream that frets its base, while it is agitated by cascades from the neighbouring hills. Close to the ancient gate of the town the banks are covered with wood and some scanty tufts of grass, where a flock of goats were nibbling, attended by several youths attired in a rather becoming costume of dark brown cloth. A little further in advance is the pretty village of San Lorenzo Nuovo, whence there is a charming prospect of the Lake of Bolsena, whose banks are finely wooded; and the entire scene is picturesque in the extreme.

At San Lorenzo extra horses were procured. On the borders of the Lake of Bolsena is a wretched village, said to be built on the site of the ancient city of Volsinium. In the vicinity are many broken pillars, cornices, mosaics, &c., the remains of former magnificence. Previous to the Christian era, the situation must have been healthy, for otherwise the Etruscans would

never have reared one of their principal cities on such a spot. Misery is now too apparent in that devoted place. While the romantic lake, whose banks are covered with stately oaks and a variety of vigorous trees and plants, allures by its enchanting appearance, its atmosphere is impregnated with a lurking poison which is destructive of health, and oftentimes of life itself.

During the powerful heats of summer, those deadly evaporations ensue which are so severely felt by the inhabitants within its range. I never can forget the squalid appearance of the wretched tenants of some of the cheerless houses we passed. Despondence rested on the ghastly countenances of many men who were seated at the doors of their comfortless dwellings, labouring under fever; while the forlorn convalescents, just able to move, watched over their sick relatives or friends.

From Bolsena the road passes a hill, which is covered with basaltic columns and woods. In the course of the day we observed some curious cavities among rocks of basalt, encompassed by uninhabited wastes, where robbers

might lurk unheeded, if malaria did not chase away all that is human.

At Montefiascone we arrived before sunset, somewhat jaded; but tolerably good cheer awaited us at the inn, where the party was treated with civility and attention. All these little matters were doubly felt in regions where they are so scarce.

I may here mention that the wines of Monte Pulciano, Orvieto, and Montefiascone, are held in much esteem; but they are extremely delicate, and easily injured by transport. The white wine of the latter place is delicious, and very valuable as a medicine in various cases of obstruction. It is placed on the table in round pint bottles of thin glass, protected by a covering similar to that on the oil flask.

The costumes here differ little from those in Tuscany, but the peasants are not so prosperous or so healthy as those in the happy valley of the Arno.

Among the women I observed some erect, well-formed figures; faces full of regularity and expression, with luxuriant black hair tastefully arranged.

The male peasants have a very weather-beaten aspect; and their dress consists of a broad-brimmed hat, jacket of brown cloth, knee-breeches, cotton stockings, and shoes. While I stood admiring the Lake of Bolsena, many men and women passed in various directions; and they seemed much gratified in staring at me while I scrutinized the views in the neighbourhood.

On the 18th, we were on our way before daybreak; and after traversing a deserted district overspread with a dense vapour, we arrived at Viterbo to breakfast. It is said to have been the ancient Volturna, capital of Etruria, and contains many picturesque houses, moss-covered fountains, and no less than twenty-eight convents for miserable nuns and friars, in the midst of a beggarly population of 9,000 persons! The town lies at the base of the classical Mons Ciminus, where the consul, Fabius, in the early period of the republic, defeated the Etruscans in a decisive engagement.

The hill is covered with brushwood, chestnut-trees, and dark stone-pines; and from its summit we enjoyed a charming peep of the Lake Vico,

anciently Lacus Ciminus, lying amidst thickly-wooded precipices.

Ronciglione, with its ruinous streets and old castle, is spread over the summit of precipitous banks, and is considered healthy, although so close to the district of malaria.

The costume of the women is most becoming. It consists of a square piece of cloth over the head, with a fancy border; stays laced in front, and long full sleeves tied to the shoulder with many bows of coloured ribbons. Some of these women whom we saw on the way to church were graceful figures, with glossy, raven ringlets and sparkling eyes.

At Monterosi, we passed some wretched peasants labouring under fever. Not far hence, the roads of Perugia and Siena join near the solitary inn of Baccano, where we slept. There the worst accommodations and incivility await the traveller; but the man who is about to behold Rome for the first time, bears patiently with any temporary inconvenience. For my own part, I scarcely slept for reflecting that next day was to bring me within the walls of the eternal city.

We quitted Baccano on the sixth and last day of our journey, at an early hour; and at a little before six in the morning, I saw the DOME OF ST. PETER'S! A brilliant sun now spread his enlivening rays over the flat, deserted Campagna, whose inhabitants disappeared with the downfal of ancient Rome.

Silence and desolation there dwell together. Scanty cultivation amidst brushwood is occasionally seen, surrounded by brown herbage; and the ruins of tombs, with some scattered cypress trees, appear like the mourners of departed glory. How unsuited is such a scene to the approach to a magnificent, civilized, populous city; yet how well does it accord with the sacred ruins of the mistress of the world, while it so fitly prepares the mind for the contemplation of their decay.

Whilst treading the storied soil of Latium, that ancient land of lawgivers, patriots, philosophers, and heroes, it is almost painful to enter a modern city governed by priests, among those degenerate sons of Italy who now fill the noble streets of Rome.

After reaching the ancient Via Flaminia, we soon crossed the yellow Tiber over the Ponte

Molle. The original bridge was erected 115 years before the Christian era. At the defeat of Maxentius by the Emperor Constantine it was almost destroyed. On its ruins another bridge was reared, which has been repaired by Pope Pius the Seventh.

The golden Tiber, as anciently called, is a turbid, sluggish stream, of a brownish colour, whose banks are deserted and devoid of cultivation. Yet no traveller possessed of the least feeling or taste can behold the classical river of ancient Rome without emotion and veneration. The road on the other side of the Tiber runs between high walls, which enclose gardens or villas. We soon got amongst droves of goats and market-carts drawn by fine large oxen of a dove colour, on their return from Rome. In consequence of the continual clouds of dust raised by the numerous feet of men and beasts, added to the glare of the sun, as our vehicle approached the Porta del Popolo, we did not see it distinctly until the carriage was rolling close to its arch, which admitted us into glorious Rome at ten o'clock in the morning. This gate was erected after the designs of Michael Angelo and Vignola, and occupies the site of

the ancient Flaminian gate. It leads into the Square of the People, whence three streets diverge to various quarters of the city. An Egyptian obelisk stands in the centre, which forms a fine vista to the above streets. The middle street is the Corso, once the Flaminian way where triumphal arches stood, and triumphs were conducted. The Corso is now a fashionable residence, and contains several palaces, churches, numerous shops, &c. It is the favourite drive and lounge of the Romans, and the principal resort for all the extravagant humours of the Carnival. A doganiere took possession of the carriage at the gate, and conducted it to the custom-house, where our portmanteaus were emptied of their contents, which were bandied from one official to another without ceremony, for examination.

After packing, I went to Franc's Hotel, in the via Condotti, and I have got tolerable accommodation. Immediately after my arrival I took a walk towards Saint Peter's, in order to have a glance at its immense exterior; and I must be candid in confessing that it proved a disappointment. My first near view was from the bridge of San Angelo, whence the dome of

Saint Peter's is by no means so magnificent as I had anticipated. After crossing the Tiber, I passed through a narrow, dirty street, which soon brought me to the immense circular area of which Saint Peter's forms a part. The coup d'œil is truly grand, but the majesty of the dome is greatly lessened from its being placed too much in rear of the main body of the church. By an ill planned front, the cupola is partly lost, instead of soaring above the sight in all its vastness. The contiguity of the Vatican detracts from the general plan, and its heavy walls are offensive and out of place. The semi-circular colonnade which sweeps so gracefully round the spacious area till it ends in a square with the front of Saint Peter's, forms a stately approach. It harmonizes with the architectural picture, while it affords shelter, and excludes the mean appearance of a beggarly neighbourhood.

An Egyptian obelisk is reared in the middle of this space, between fountains which are constantly heaving their pure waters, and adding a freshness to the surrounding atmosphere. With all these splendid accessories, Saint Peter's did not overwhelm me in the way that Saint

Paul's did. I cannot account for this feeling, which you will perhaps impute to a want of taste. It must be observed, however, that when I saw Saint Paul's for the first time, I was an untravelled youth; and as my eye has been lately accustomed to buildings of a noble description, it is less sensible to the pre-eminent grandeur of Saint Peter's.

LETTER XV.

Way for a Stranger to see Rome.—Bridge and Castle of St. Angelo.—The Interior of St. Peter's.—General Observations.

ROME, 20th May, 1824.

MANY persons after their arrival feel great difficulty as to the best plan which should be adopted in seeing this magnificent city. The rational way of seeing Rome is, in my opinion, to go wherever one's humour dictates, until such time as the topography of both the ancient and modern city becomes tolerably known; for I look upon the one as often illustrating the other by the mixture of ancient fabrics or ruins with works of modern date; and the noble structures of the past, or their scattered remains, often harmonize beautifully with the lofty temples, palaces, and fountains of the present age. If sufficient time afterwards permits, some regular plan can be laid down of retracing those steps

which the first ardent enthusiasm, perhaps, urged one to take too quickly for its full gratification.

The western part of Rome, on the right bank of the Tiber, is called Trastevere, and in that quarter Saint Peter's is situated. The inhabitants are called Trasteverini, and are a peculiar race, differing in many essentials from the other Romans. At the extremity of the bridge of St. Angelo, the massive castle of the same name (originally built for Adrian's mausoleum) rears its round tower in fortified array.

I observed yesterday that the dome of St. Peter's is sunk and hidden by the height of the front of the church, which appears to be a glaring blunder, and causes a regret that the powerful genius of Michael Angelo had not been employed in finishing a building which he assisted in erecting. The finest view of the vast cupola is from the rear of the church, where its unobstructed majesty bursts full upon the sight. Thus beheld, it must be pronounced the most glorious triumph of art, and the finest temple ever reared to God. The approach to the front of St. Peter's is noble and remarkably

well adapted to the pomp and rich picturesque appearance of the crowded religious ceremonies of the Catholic Church. The covered portico is of such large dimensions as to be sufficient in itself for a church. At each extremity of it are colossal equestrian statues of Charlemagne and Constantine.

I cannot express to you the overpowering feelings which took possession of my mind after entering this vast sanctuary illumined by the sun's dazzling rays. How insignificant I felt while standing under the lofty nave, viewing the bronze canopy, which is 124 feet high, at the distance of about 600 feet. The visitors in groups, as they walked under the four arches which divide the nave from the aisles, appeared much smaller than children; and the enormous proportions of the whole fabric, which are so admirably adjusted, appear far less than they are in reality, while they overpower the colossal size of statues, relievi, altars, and doors. The statues of children holding vases for holy water have an appearance of no more than three feet, though they are of gigantic proportions; and the copy of Raphael's Transfiguration, in mosaic, has but the semblance of the original in dimen-

sions, yet I am told the former is three times larger.

The unrivalled cupola was designed by Michael Angelo. I cannot describe it, but every one who has stood under the glorious concave will probably be inclined to think with Forsyth, that "viewed in its design, its altitude, or even its decoration,—viewed either as a whole or as a part, it enchants the eye, it satisfies the taste, it expands the soul. The very air seems to eat up all that is harsh or colossal, and leaves us nothing but the sublime to feast on:—a sublime peculiar as the genius of the immortal architect, and comprehensible only on the spot."

It is not my intention to give you any particular account of St. Peter's, as the subject would fill a volume. The great altar of bronze, designed by Bernini, is particularly beautiful, and worthy of the noblest church in Christendom. Underneath is the tomb of the patron saint lighted by costly lamps, which are kept constantly burning. The bronze statue of St. Peter, and the saint's chair supported by colossal statues of two popes, are objects which every guide hastens to point out to your atten-

tion. St. Peter's toes have disappeared amidst the fervent attrition of his devotees; the prince and the beggar being equally privileged, each continues in his turn to kiss, handle, and rub the glossy stump of his saintship. The pope and his attendants also keep up the farce of rubbing and saluting the precious foot of this Catholic idol, to the great edification of their believing flock.

The sepulchral monuments of the popes are executed by Michael Angelo, Fontana, Bernini, Canova, and other eminent sculptors. I was particularly charmed with the monument of Pope Clement XIII. by Canova. The pope is represented as kneeling in the act of devout prayer, and such is the earnest simplicity of the whole man that I felt inclined to bend the knee along with him. The figure of Religion is on the right and the genius of Death stands on the left. Two noble looking lions complete the group.

In another part of the church is a monument raised to the last of the Stuarts at the expense of the King of England. Such a dignified mark of respect to a fallen royal line is worthy of the liberal sympathy of George the Fourth.

It speaks volumes in his praise. This tasteful memorial is also from the powerful chisel of Canova, and its subject is the genius of Death and Sleep watching at the tomb of the Stuarts.

The access to the ball on the top of St. Peter's is extremely easy. It is commenced by a staircase, and after traversing the immense roof of the church with a custode, the cupola is reached. It is constructed upon double walls, and by means of intervening staircases there is a gradual ascent to the galleries, lanthorn, and uplifted ball. The last part of the journey is performed by means of a straight ladder, which is rather unpleasant to some persons. Notwithstanding the magnitude and gorgeous splendour of St. Peter's, and the imposing ceremonies of the Catholic ritual at its fountain head, surrounded by the descendants of ancient Rome, I confess that I have received stronger religious impressions while pacing among the silent tombs in Westminster Abbey.

LETTER XVI.

Roman Forum.—Remarks on the remains of Triumphal Arches, Coliseum, Baths, &c. of Titus, Temple of Peace, Circus Maximus, Temple of Romulus, Cloaca Maxima, Temple of Vesta, &c.—Capitol; its Buildings.—Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius.

ROME, 24th May, 1824.

I HAVE delivered several letters of introduction to British artists who are studying here, and every day I pass a few hours amongst them, much to my satisfaction. Before I say any thing more of modern Rome, you must allow me to make a few observations on the sacred remains of the ancient Queen of Cities.

On the way to the Forum, I walked through several streets lined with palaces, surrounded by priests, friars, and a beggarly population. In almost every corner there is an accumulation of rubbish, and the very entrance and staircases of marble palaces are not free from nuisances.

The tranquil Forum lies amidst the Seven Hills, crowned with those dark ruins which

speak to the beholder of Italy's most glorious days. How beautifully do the cypress and ilex appear, while mingled with temples, arches, and the shattered columns which stand as mourners over the graves of Republican and Imperial Rome; where herds of goats browse, seek shelter from meridian heat, and bleat to the call of some watchful herdsman, who sits ruminating amidst the fragments of an old wall or prostrate column, or conversing with some stray traveller like myself, or with any holy brother that happens to pass to his convent.

At the base of the Capitoline Hill, the first object pointed out to me was the Carcere Mamertina, a dark dungeon where Jugurtha was imprisoned and starved to death, after being dragged in chains at the triumph of Marius.

The Arch of Severus is close to it, and opens to view the Via Sacra. About two-thirds of it were long covered with rubbish, which has been removed. It is adorned with fluted columns of the composite order; but taken as a whole, the architects condemn the design.

Titus's Arch, near the Palatine Hill, a very fine specimen of the composite, is flanked by two pillars in each front; it is loaded with

sculpture, and was reared for the Emperor's triumph over Jerusalem.

Lastly, between the Palatine Hill and the Coliseum, we reach the Arch of Constantine, which is composed of a large and two smaller arches. The whole design is noble, and full of beauties. Its pillars, sculpture, and relievi were taken from the remains of Trajan's Arch. Constantine, in his desire to exceed the splendour of Imperial Rome, called to his aid a system of plunder which has been imitated too successfully by the ambitious rulers of the Church and their friends.

The magnificent walls of the Coliseum and Pantheon, which so long resisted the fury of the elements and earthquakes, and had been spared by the hands of Gothic invaders, were afterwards robbed of a great portion of their most costly bronzes, marbles, and even walls, for the decoration of modern churches, or the erection of private palaces*. This barbarous system has been

* I think it was to Pope Urban VIII. (Maffeo Barberini) that the first destruction of a portion of the Coliseum is to be attributed. His nephews were one day requiring of him the funds to rear a palace, when, perhaps wishing to rid himself of the annoyance of their impor-

fortunately put down, and every ruin is now held sacred.

The Coliseum is by far the most remarkable ruin in Rome, although time has swallowed up much of its splendour. This superb amphitheatre was founded by Vespasian. It is of an oval form, 560 feet long, 470 broad, 160 high, and above 1600 in circumference, and was built for the accommodation of a hundred thousand persons. The gigantic walls are reared upon arches, with intervening pillars of the Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite orders. The details are not free from defects; but these are overlooked amidst its surpassing grandeur, and the graceful form of its outline. We cannot help shuddering at the reflection, that such a noble fabric has been used for the sanguinary theatre of mortal strife. The arena is now

tunity, he said, "If you want materials, all that you have to do, is to pull down a corner of the Coliseum." They took him at his word, and on that very night they commenced the work of demolition. This conduct caused great offence to the Romans, who immortalized their infamous proceedings in a distich, which I do not exactly remember, but which was to the effect, that "that which had been spared by the Barbari, had been destroyed by the Barbarini."

fitted up as a place of out-door worship, where friars hold forth to the astonished idlers of the suburbs. I have spent many hours in mounting the dilapidated steps of the amphitheatre, and contemplating its faded proportions during the various effects of sunshine, twilight, and moonlight, and I always return to it with fresh delight. How exquisitely Lord Byron describes the Coliseum, in Manfred. It is one of the most admirable pictures that words ever painted.

In the rear of the last-mentioned ruin are the remains of Titus's baths, spread over the Esquiline Mount. On my arrival there I found a party of gentlemen who were desirous to examine them, and after the custode was found we entered the subterranean galleries. The guide pointed out the arabesques and frescos by means of wax candles attached to the end of a long pole. Although these chambers are very damp, in consequence of a garden which runs over a part of them, it is wonderful to find the frescos so fresh and brilliant. I was particularly pleased with the figures of a nymph, a fawn, a slave, and with the ornaments upon the ceilings of a long room. We

have to thank the French government, which removed the rubbish some twelve years ago from these interesting Thermæ, and thus gave access to works that were the admiration and study of Raphael. I regret to find several sensible modern authors seize every opportunity to abuse the French; but if the good and evil brought upon Italy by them were fairly balanced, it is doubtful whether the former would not preponderate. I think it would.

The walls of Titus's Palace communicate with the baths, and I there saw the alcove which once contained the unrivalled group of the Laocoon and his children. Each division of these chambers is sparingly lighted through a small opening over an immense door. In one of the chambers we saw fragments of vases filled with mineral colours, urns, and mosaics. The dwellings of Horace and Virgil were in the vicinity of the palace; as also the celebrated gardens of Mæcenas, where Nero stood singing to his lyre the burning of Troy, while he beheld with pleasure Rome in flames.

The remains of many other baths, with corresponding halls and reservoirs, are to be traced in the ancient city. The heat of the climate,

the activity of the inhabitants, and want of linen, tended to make the ancient Romans attached to frequent ablutions; we can therefore account for the ample thermæ which were in such general use.

At no great distance from these baths is the Temple of Peace, which is one of the most beautiful and picturesque ruins of antiquity. This temple was erected by Vespasian after the Judean war, in the year seventy-five, upon the site of the portico of Nero's golden Palace. It was lined with bronze, precious stones, and marbles; and Pliny mentions several works of Grecian art which were deposited there. The Temple of Peace was used as a public treasury, until it was consumed by fire. Three immense tribunes, a part of the walls and lozenge roof, are all that remain in their original situation. Fallen fragments lie scattered in the interior among grass, weeds, and wild flowers. The treasury of Vespasian is now a beautiful ruin, open to the heavens, and a resting-place for goats, which are to be seen there every evening at sunset.

Last night I went to see the splendid wreck of Saint Paul's, which has been destroyed by

fire, in consequence of the negligence of workmen employed in the church on some necessary repairs. You cannot imagine a more dreary sight than the remains of this beautiful temple. Polished marble columns, slabs, and mosaics, are accumulated among charcoal, cinders, and rubbish of various kinds. An Italian traveller assured me that a great many precious articles were stolen during the confusion; and he confessed, with a grin, that some pieces of lapis lazuli, which he found at the conflagration, were sold to an English jeweller for a hundred guineas. On my return home, I made a hasty visit to various antiquities and other objects, which I shall enumerate in the order they were seen.

The Pyramid, or Tomb of Caius Cestus, is a noble monument of very simple design; but the vain rich man for whom it was erected, is now forgotten. Close to that tomb is the stranger's burying ground, where many Englishmen are for ever laid under the classic mould.

The Circus Maximus was built between the Palatine and Aventine Mounts, although there is not a vestige of it remaining. It is said to have held 200,000 souls. The games held in

its arena were in honour of the gods; and they consisted of chariot, horse, and foot races, boxing, leaping, fights of gladiators, &c. Proceeding along the foot of the Palatine Hill *, you soon arrive at the site of the Temple of Romulus, the founder of earliest Rome. It is the most ancient classical mount, and full of interesting story; for there the rude city of Romulus is said to have been founded 753 years B.C. Over the mere dust of the first habitations a succession of others were built. These have in their turn disappeared, and shapeless walls are now seen overspread with vines and gardens, amidst which an humble convent rears its head, inhabited by a few destitute friars.

The Cloaca Maxima is one of the most extraordinary remains of early Roman masonry. The interior is choked up, although both ends of the drain are accessible. The mouth, from which it emptied itself into the Tiber, may still be seen near the Temple of Vesta. This unrivalled public work was constructed by Tar-

* On the Palatine Mount the Cæsars had their palaces from the period of Augustus to the decline of the empire.

quinius Priscus, with immense blocks of stone, joined without mortar, and is alluded to in Pliny's works, as being the admiration of that age.

The beautiful remain of the Temple of Vesta is in tolerable preservation. It is in the form of a Rotunda, surrounded with Corinthian columns of white marble; now roofed in and sometimes used as a place of Catholic worship.

Near the Via Sacra are three handsome Corinthian columns of white marble, which are considered a part of the Temple of Jupiter Stator; they are held to be the most perfect models of their kind in existence, and highly esteemed by architects. On the same ground Romulus is supposed to have rallied his troops, who retreated before the Sabines.

Augustus raised a temple to Jove the Thunderer, in consequence of his escape from a flash of lightning. Three of its pillars, with a portion of the frieze, are the only remains of this monument, which are much esteemed for their just proportions.

As I turned towards the Capitol, I passed the Temple of Concord, founded by Camillus, after the reconciliation of the Senate with the Roman people. It was in that place that the

Senate condemned Lentulus and Cethegus, the daring accomplices of Catiline. The beautiful Ionic pillars of the portico are all that remain of a building so often mentioned in Roman history.

The Capitol is full of interesting reminiscences. Its commanding heights have been covered by a constant succession of temples, porticos, and statues;—but all vestiges of its antiquity have vanished, and the palaces which now stand there, were built by Michael Angelo.

After the primitive Temple of Jupiter Feretrius, which was raised by Romulus, had disappeared, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was built. The latter was twice destroyed by lightning. Domitian is said to have rebuilt it for the last time with great magnificence. It was the receptacle of the spoils of conquered nations, which were accounted as sacred offerings to the gods.

Other parts of the hill were adorned with temples of Jupiter-Moneta, Fortuna Primigenia, Vejovis, &c. All these edifices were richly ornamented and filled with statues.

The museum of the Capitol contains some

fine antiques, and an extensive collection of imperial busts. In the hasty view I took of the gallery of paintings, I cannot pretend to give an opinion upon it. The famous bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius is placed in the centre of the square. It is wonderfully spirited. Michael Angelo idolized it, and considered the horse as almost in motion.

On the south side of the Capitol there is an humble garden that overhangs the Tarpeian rock, where malefactors were precipitated into the Forum. It is about sixty feet high, although previous to the Forum being encumbered with ruins of ancient buildings, the precipice was probably not less than a hundred feet in height. From the tower of the Capitol there is an extensive and charming prospect of the silent remains of ancient Rome, and the modern city, with the country beyond the walls.

The grandest approach to the Capitol is from modern Rome, by two lofty flights of steps. At their base on each side is a sculpture of a lioness in Egyptian marble, with pure streams of water flowing from their mouths; and on the summit are colossal statues of Castor and Pollux holding horses.

It is on that spot that you retire from the present scene, the glitter of shops, crowds of business and pleasure, to commune with the glories of the past, scattered over the undulating surface of Rome's seven hills.

LETTER XVII.

Vatican.—Loggie of Raphael.—Sistine Chapel.—Michael Angelo's Frescos of the Last Judgment, &c.—Camere of Raphael and his Frescos.—Picture Gallery.—Transfiguration by Raphael, &c.—Statues.—Apollo Belvidere.—Laocoon.—Library.

ROME, 25th May, 1824.

It is my purpose in this letter to give you some account of the splendid works of art which enrich the churches and palaces of modern Rome, more particularly of the principal rare antique marbles in the Vatican, which have escaped the ravages of ages, and of the sublime Frescos of Michael Angelo and Raphael, still glorious amidst their decay. The Vatican is an immense palace adjoining St. Peter's; it covers an area of twelve hundred feet long, and a thousand in breadth. The principal entry is from the portico of St. Peter's, by the superb staircase of the Scala Regia. At Florence most of the public galleries, churches, &c., are seen for

little or no money; but here you must pay for every thing, although on my first visit to the Vatican it was with some difficulty that the silver key opened the doors. It happened when I arrived that the custodi were in the enjoyment of a comfortable nap after dinner, from which none of them could be roused. Nay, I am persuaded these drones would not be stirred from their agreeable situation for the golden bribes of a true catholic; and what was to be expected for the common fee of a heretic? All I could do was to exercise my patience as others do in Rome, by waiting quietly for the return of the slumbering guides to their posts. Meanwhile I passed an hour very delightfully in the Loggie of Raphael. The first Loggia is covered with frescos of treillage, flowers, and other ornaments—supposed to be executed by his scholars The second is full of interest, as on its ceiling there is an admirable series of small frescos in elucidation of remarkable passages of Scripture. They are engraved, and generally called Raphael's Bible. A few only of the frescos were executed by Raphael's own hand, the remainder being by Giuilo Romano and others.

Four attempts were made to personify the

terrible majesty of the Supreme Being; but how could Raphael presume to represent in artificial colours the invisible Creator of the heavens and the earth?

The colouring of the whole series has been much injured from their open, exposed situation; and as the chief beauty of Raphael's Bible lies in its designs, the engraved copies give an excellent idea of the work.

The keeper of the chapels being at last awake and at hand with the keys, I shall now conduct you to the Sistine chapel, where Michael Angelo exhausted all the powers of his unrivalled genius, by creating on its dull walls the sublimest picture ever executed. The whole space over the altar is adorned by the great fresco of the Last Judgment—so perfectly well known and ably described by many of the first artists and competent judges of the last three centuries. It strikes me that no person can possibly comprehend the learned and transcendent beauties of this wonderful production without much study and frequent visits.

Time, which is unsparing of man's greatest works, has shewn no favour to Michael Angelo

—less so perhaps than to any of his cotemporaries.

It is generally known that this admirable genius despised oil painting; and he probably did not pay much attention to the study of even plaster colouring, as most of his frescos are deficient in that brilliancy and depth which are found in those of Corregio and some other painters of an old date.

Vastness in design, the severe grandeur of his outline, and the overpowering sublimity which pervades all his religious subjects, are surely the tests by which he should be pronounced unrivalled!

Raphael in portraying Nature, always elevated the subject, and he excelled alike in historical and portrait painting. The former are generally faultless in imagination and design. His females combine the perfection of the antique with the graces of Nature; and his men are dignified and characteristic. Raphael's works leave nothing to be wished for by the real lovers of art; and they are so full of captivating beauty and simplicity as to be understood and relished by every per-

son that examines them. The very reverse is the case with Michael Angelo. His sublime conceptions are addressed only to such minds as are imbued with a perfect love of art, and to those that can appreciate the loftiness of his epic descriptions, or the mysterious feeling which breathes throughout his religious subjects.

The Last Judgment was a subject that accorded with all the sublimer feelings of Michael Angelo's nature, and his fresco of it displays the matured powers of a mind soaring above all difficulties. Every human passion and the most wonderful variety of muscular energy are called into action amidst the learned intricacies of this vast composition. The Son of God is represented above arrayed in heavenly splendour, in the act of denouncing the terrible sentence of "Go, ye accursed, into everlasting fire". The scene of horror among the wicked who are lost for ever and dragged to their doom by the furious agents of hell, forms a powerful contrast to those beatified beings whom the grave has yielded up to the pure regions of eternal happiness. As Michael Angelo was satisfied with a negative colour, we cannot be astonished at

the mists of ages darkening such a style, or the smoke of wax candles and the dampness of particular seasons absorbing many parts of his noblest frescos. The Last Judgment is but a shadow of what it must have been in its original state; and it is difficult to examine its remains for want of sufficient light.

The remaining walls of the Sistine chapel are painted in imitation of rich drapery suspended between pillars. The deep frieze is covered with the colossal figures of the meditating prophets and sibyls—also in fresco, from the pencil of the same great artist; and the ceiling is enriched by his nine pictures of the Creator calling the world out of chaos—of the creation—of Paradise—and the expulsion of our first parents from Paradise. It is painful to throw back the head in order to examine a painted ceiling, which is more easily seen in a recumbent posture, as I experienced in examining the above. Michael Angelo painted two frescos in the Paolina chapel. They are the Conversion of St. Paul and the Crucifixion of St. Peter, which have been so blackened by the smoke of the thousand burning tapers during passion week, as to be hardly visible.

The Camere of Raphael contain his most celebrated frescos, but they are so delicately executed and so much damaged by time, that they require to be visited again and again to trace their exquisite beauties. The School of Athens is the finest composition in the series, and probably the most perfect in existence.

That most classical group of Apollo on Mount Parnassus and the Muses, is over a window in the same room.

In another chamber there is a work of great beauty and effect. It is the escape of St. Peter from prison; and the means by which it was effected are exhibited in three different paintings. The variety of lights employed in the subject are most admirably managed.

The battle between Constantine and Maxentius graces the fourth apartment. It was executed by Giulio Romano from Raphael's design, and is a most spirited production, although defective in colouring.

The collection of oil paintings in the Vatican is extremely small, but most of them are noble specimens of great masters.

Raphael's great work of the Transfiguration is one of them, and notwithstanding all the in-

jury it has suffered from time, and transportation, and restorers, it is still a most overpowering picture. The Transfiguration has always been considered the masterpiece of the immortal painter,—and its equal does not exist.

The Madonna di Foligno. This is considered one of Raphael's very best efforts in colouring, and in that respect perhaps superior to the Transfiguration.

Domenichino's Communion of St. Jerome. The composition and colouring of this beautiful picture are equally good, and it is in excellent condition. Nothing can surpass the expression of the dying but resigned saint, or the sympathy of the priest and the attendants. The landscape in the back ground, a picture in itself, is painted with much truth.

Titian's Martyrdom of St. Sebastian is an astonishing specimen of fine colouring. So much so, that Sir Joshua Reynolds called it flesh and blood.

Queen Helen's Meditation, by Paul Veronese, is full of grace, sentiment, and delightful repose.

Baroccio's Annunciation, in imitation of Corregio's mellow tones, is admirable.

Guido's Fortune pursued by Cupid is a beautiful work. It has been repeated several times by the same master, and is well known in England.

The museum of the Vatican is a depository of great magnificence, and probably unrivalled in its collection of rare antique statues. One becomes quite dazzled with the silent marble population which covers the galleries; the marble columns of various colours, polished mosaic pavements, and richly painted ceilings. On approaching the temple which enshrines the Apollo Belvidere, I never can forget the impression instantaneously made on me by that glorious statue. The Venus de' Medici wooes the spectator into gradual admiration, whilst the Apollo commands it at the first glance.

How inimitably the vain struggle is represented in the group of the Laocoon, and who is there that does not sympathise with the father's love for his perishing offspring?

The Muses occupy a splendid saloon, surrounded by other fine statues. Canova is honoured with a separate room for two of his works. They consist of a combat between two gladiators; and of Perseus with the head

of Medusa. The former are admirably composed, although they appeared too fat after the antique.

Before taking leave of the Vatican, I shall just mention the Library, which is considered the largest in space in the world; although its collection of printed books comparatively is not great. The collection of manuscripts is rare, and amounts to at least 30,000. Henry the Eighth's letters to Anne Boleyn, and his Treatise on the Seven Sacraments, presented to Leo the Tenth, are among the number. Fine collections of medals and prints are attached to the library; and the archives of the Vatican are deposited in one of its chambers.

I must now conclude, with the promise of resuming my remarks in the course of a few days.

LETTER XVIII.

The Pantheon. — Columns. — Obelisks. — Fountains. — Palaces.—Roman Indolence.—Proclamation of the Holy Year at St. Peter's.—Churches.—Statue of Moses, by Michael Angelo. — Remains of ancient Rome .— Reflections.—Magnificent Views from the Tower of the Capitol.

ROME, 28th May, 1824.

I HAVE my diary before me; and I shall now send you a faithful extract, which will shew you what I have been about since my last Letter, of the 25th.

On the day afterwards, I examined many ancient and modern buildings, and amongst them the Pantheon, which afforded me much gratification.

Although this heathen temple has been stripped of the metal, brass ornaments, and marbles, which constituted a part of the edifice, it is still one of the most entire buildings of antiquity. The Corinthian portico is a perfect model for an architect. It is supported by six-

teen columns of oriental granite; but its grandeur is lessened by the ground rising in front, and the whole building is encumbered by mean houses.

You traverse the inimitable portico, and enter the Pantheon through its bronze gate. The great canopy overhangs the spectator, and the heavens are seen through its central orb, which imparts a pure light to every part of the area underneath. The floor slopes inwards; and the rain is thus drained off as it falls through the aperture at top.

This pagan temple became a place of Catholic worship; and I have beheld at its altars, under a flood of heaven's light, hundreds of Romans bending the knee to the only true and eternal God. I cannot avoid mentioning a circumstance that frightened me out of this noble church. It was a dead body, lying exposed in a coffin, in a state of decomposition. Upon retiring to a part of the surrounding space, my shoulder came against the feet of the corpse. I immediately turned round, and saw the ghastly object, most offensive both to sight and smell.

Trajan's Column is a celebrated historical

pillar. It is 124 English feet high, and is now crowned with a statue of St. Peter.

The Pillar of Antonine stands on more elevated ground than the former, in the Piazza Colonna; and a statue of St. Paul is on its summit.

The numerous obelisks which adorn Rome are monuments of her former fame, magnificence, and skill. Immense mechanical power and labour must have been required, to place these obelisks where they now stand.

No city in Europe can boast of such splendid public fountains as modern Rome, and it is impossible to imagine more beautiful or costly structures. Their moving streams and sparkling jets are to be seen in all the principal squares or streets. These fountains are regularly supplied with abundance of pure water, which contributes much to the health and comfort of the inhabitants. Those of Trevi, Navona, and Paolina, are particularly striking and elegant. During the month of August, the water of Navona is forced out upon the spacious square which surrounds it, twice a week, where thousands of the better classes take exercise in their carriages to enjoy its freshness.

Although the Roman nobility and Catholic clergy are generally poor, they live in princely dwellings. The indolence of the people meets you everywhere, and is particularly striking in all their domestic arrangements. An Englishman who is accustomed to order, propriety, and comfort at home, need not envy the proud Roman in his dirty, neglected marble palace. The houses are never half swept, and the rooms and staircases are rarely washed.

Yesterday morning I accompanied Mr. M. to St. Peter's Church, to witness the ceremony of the Pope proclaiming the Holy Year, which happens only every twenty-five years, when no carnival or public amusements are permitted. As soon as we arrived at the Castle of St. Angelo, we got into an immense crowd of men, women, and children, pushing eagerly forward to the ceremonial. All the avenues towards St. Peter's were filled with carriages, horsemen, and pedestrians. Stalls were erected in different streets for the sale of wine, liqueurs, and eatables, while asses were led about, loaded with fruit.

We entered the church, and I looked in vain for the myriads of human beings who preceded

us. They were lost amidst the arches and chapels of the immense pile.

In one of the chapels, I heard high mass performed by a band of male soprano voices, in the most beautiful style; and I afterwards walked round the church, where thousands of peasants from various villages, attired in different picturesque costumes, were lost in admiration of the surrounding magnificence.

On issuing from the church, a great part of the space in front was filled with troops, and spectators in carriages or on foot. I had now an opportunity of seeing many beautiful Roman ladies casting their fine eyes towards the stone gallery in front of St. Peter's, where the Pope was to make his appearance. After some delay, his holiness was at last known to be near by the ringing of the great bell; and towards one o'clock the Pope was carried in a chair to the centre of the gallery. After the murmuring of the assembled thousands, all was a perfect silence, and the greater proportion of the immense population fell on their knees, while the Father of the Church proclaimed the Holy Year, and bestowed his benediction on the

people. The thunder of the cannon from the Castle of St. Angelo closed the ceremony, and the crowd gradually disappeared.

Afterwards I visited the churches of St. John Lateran, Santa Maria Maggiore, and San Pietro in vinculis. The first is the see of the sovereign pontiff, and is, after St. Peter's, the grandest church in Rome. It contains marble statues of the apostles; and the ceiling is divided into compartments, with scriptural subjects painted on them. The façade added by Clement V. is chastely designed, and generally admired. The obelisk in the square of St. John Lateran is the largest specimen in Rome.

At no great distance is the Scala Santa, consisting of twenty-eight marble steps, supposed to have been brought from Jerusalem. No one is permitted to ascend them without being upon his knees. I was not inclined to try the experiment, although many devotees, who were wearing out their breeches' knees, seemed not to be troubled about the consequences.

Santa Maria Maggiore is erected on the summit of the Esquiline hill. It is dedicated to the Virgin, and is a most noble church. The in-

terior is divided into a spacious nave and two aisles by means of forty columns of white marble and granite, and the roof is finely gilded.

The church of San Pietro in vinculis contains the famous statue of Moses by Michael Angelo. Moses rests his right hand on the tables of the law, while he addresses the people in great anger. It is a most striking sculpture, and appears to be the very best of Michael Angelo's great works.

Towards sunset, I do not know a more agreeable way of spending one's time, than leaving the busy hum of the modern city and ruminating among the forsaken remains of ancient Rome. From the tower of the Capitol I have occasionally meditated on the transitory scene of human life, while gazing upon the ruined marble palaces, temples, and triumphal arches of the masters of the universe; on the mouldering walls of the ancient city, blended with the dark cypress; and its mosaic pavements covered with the spreading vine. Where are the ashes of the Scipios and Cæsars? No traces of them are left. Their very tombs are swept from the soil on which they reposed.

The hour of sunset well accords with a pro-

spect which may be called between the living and the dead. Casting your eyes towards the north and west, you behold the modern city spread over the Campus Martius, extending along both sides of the Tiber, and twining round the base of the Capitol. On the other side, over the seven hills and intervening vales, are the deserted ruins of ancient Rome,—

"The Goth, the Christian, time, war, flood, and fire,
Have dealt upon the Seven-hilled City's pride."*

Beyond the Roman Forum, towards the south, are the volcanic undulations of the dreary Campagna, with the insulated mass of the Alban Mount covered with luxuriant woods—smiling amidst desolation. Its shady retreats are studded with ancient ruins and the habitations of the Romans, where they repose in safety, above the influence of the feverish plain. Turning eastward are the Tiburtine hills. In the back ground, still more to the east, are the Sabine mountains, encompassed by the snow-shrouded Apennines, closing in the picture to the east and north.

Mount Soracte forms a striking feature of

* Byron.

this vast panorama, which rears its head about eight leagues to the north-east, over the sterile level of the Campagna.

The Tiber rolls through this extensive plain, and entering Rome, winds among its streets and ruins, when, shortly afterwards, the tranquil stream is received by the Mediterranean.

Many recollections of early Roman history were revived when this magnificent panorama was spread before me. I was only roused from these delightful fancies when the last rays of the sun fell upon the deserted ruins of Imperial Rome and the proud edifices of the modern city. No pen nor pencil could do any justice to such a scene. Its description is only to be found on the spot, where these imperfect reflections were made.

LETTER XIX.

Modern Palaces.—Nobility.—Architecture.—Collections of Pictures, &c.—Character of the Romans.—Catholic Religion and its Influence.—Reflections.—Want of Public Amusements.—Easter.—Ceremony of the Passion.

ROME, 30th May, 1824.

HAVING recently visited some of the remarkable palaces of the Roman grandees, I shall now send you a short description of them. Most of these were erected by the rich patricians of former times, and they are, with few exceptions, occupied by men of high sounding titles and very light purses. In almost every street we see palaces of a size and magnificence that astonish all transalpine travellers; but where are the people who can afford to live in such princely dwellings? Generally speaking, we find on entering that the titled owner is vegetating in some poorly furnished corner, while the principal apartments, with all their ap-

pendages, are accessible to the curious of all nations.

The poorer nobles are often put to strange shifts for the improvement of their incomes. They let the lowest stories of their dwellings as shops, and the principal rooms to different families; while they themselves occupy any corner with their half-fed establishments.

The architecture of ancient Rome in its best day was not free from impurity. It is believed that propriety was often abandoned to make room for a vain assemblage of various orders, where crowded colonnades, statues, and meretricious ornament dazzled the multitude. Much of that corrupt taste has descended to modern architects, who have perverted every order and design in many of the overgrown palaces and churches of the modern city. The early Greeks were as remarkable for their transcendant knowledge and skill in architecture as the unrivalled excellence which they attained in sculpture. They surpassed their Roman conquerors in all the fine and polite arts; and if we wish to behold the remains of the sublime and graceful in building, we must refer to their

mouldering edifices at Athens, Pæstum, or Agrigentum. They are but shadows of their former glory, although the most perfect models in existence.

On entering many of the Italian palaces, our ideas of wealth, refinement, and comfort soon subside. Dunghills and impurities are frequently seen heaped up against marble statues in the principal court yards. Mount the grand staircase, and you then behold magnificence shrouded in dirt,—ancient splendour, and modern poverty.

Some three or four rich nobleman are still left among the Romans who can live as become their station, and whose palaces exhibit that splendour and consistency which we naturally attach to them. The Borghese, Doria, and Colonna families take the lead, and can support their hereditary honours in the most suitable manner. I have been much gratified in my visits to the villa and palace of the Prince Borghese. The former is just outside of the old walls of Rome; and its beautiful shaded walks are open to all, although they are almost deserted, except on Sunday or a holiday, when

crowds of citizens resort to the alcoves and seats which surround numerous fountains and streams of water.

The Prince's collection of pictures is at his palace. It is one of the best in Rome, and I spent some hours there very agreeably. I have no time left for giving you any particular account of remarkable works; but I shall endeavour to point out the best to your attention, in case you ever visit Rome, which may save you time and trouble hereafter.

We shall begin with that first of painters, Raphael. There is a portrait of Raphael, by himself, in his first manner. The entombment of Christ, Raphael; second manner—well composed and full of sentiment.

Titian. Virgin and Child; in his first style. Innocence and Profaneness seated, or sacred and profane love; a strange unmeaning group, beautifully coloured, with a rich background and a charming sky. The Graces; one of them tying a handkerchief over Cupid's eyes,—a superb composition, apparently damaged. Titian's Wife, looking over her shoulder; a speaking portrait. Prodigal Son; well composed and coloured.

Domenichino. Diana with her Nymphs sporting. St. Cecilia; a most lovely countenance, highly finished.

Paul Veronese. St. John in the Desert; charming composition, well coloured — unfinished. St. Anthony preaching to the Fishes; sketchy, but well composed.

Albano. Four round pictures of the Seasons; full of Venuses and Cupids admirably grouped, but the colouring of the landscapes is too dark.

Carlo Dolci. Small oval picture of Jesus; highly finished. Virgin and Child; finely coloured.

M. A. Caravaggio. Virgin, Infant Christ, and St. Anne; singular effect of light and shade.

Lanfranco. Favola d'Ariosto; a clever spirited performance.

Andrea del Sarto. Holy Family; abounding with religious sentiment.

Rubens. Visitation of St. Elizabeth; small, highly finished, and charmingly coloured.

Paul Potter. Cows in a meadow, and a bull rubbing his back against a tree; beautifully finished, and full of nature.

I shall now conduct you to the palace of Cardinal Fesch, where there is one of the best private collections of pictures in Italy. The following specimens made a strong impression:—

Titian. Pope Gregory; beautifully coloured, very characteristic, and in good order. The Virgin in the Clouds with the Infant Christ —Angels under; charmingly executed.

Tintoretto. Resurrection; full of admirable groups, but unequally painted.

Corregio. The Crucified Saviour, carried by angels; a splendid composition, replete with divine feeling.

Leo. da Vinci. Sketch of the Last Supper; from this Raphael Morghen finished his engraving so highly prized.

Guido. St. Sebastian; delicate and expressive. The Assumption; the sky is too yellow, and spoils the general effect.

Nicholas Poussin. Storm of Thunder and Lightning; a grand composition, and full of nature.

Rubens. The Adoration; the composition masterly—draperies admirably painted and highly finished.

Rembrandt. Rembrandt, and his Mother; two distinct portraits, admirable specimens.

Wouvermans. Battle; wonderfully spirited and beautifully composed. Hobbima. Wood Scene; full of nature; it is refreshing to feast on the coolness of its tints.

Teniers. Crowning with Thorns; highly finished. A Snow Scene,—fishing through holes in the ice; an exquisite morçeau.

Adrian Vandevelde. A Caravan; charmingly executed.

Sir Peter Lely. A Portrait of the Duchess of Cleveland; cleverly painted, but rather chalky.

The Cardinal's bed-room, too, is open to the gaze of curious strangers. There I saw an uncommonly fine marble bust of Napoleon; also two pictures by Vandyck, of a Virgin and Child, and a Madonna, and a beautiful Snow Piece by P. Gysels.

The Colonna Palace is perhaps the grandest in Rome. Its painted roof is much admired; and it is famed for its giallo antico marble pillars and marble pavements. The collection of the Colonna is not select, although there are

some few good paintings in it of the best masters.

The Barberini Palace is a fine building. The present representative of the family, I am told, is poor, and the greater part of the palace is let.

A few good pictures are scattered over the apartments, although the best specimens of art which once adorned this gallery have been sold and dispersed over Europe.

The Spada Palace is a specimen of the dull, dirty, dilapidated description; and it is chiefly interesting for possessing the reputed statue of Pompey, at the feet of which Julius Cæsar fell covered with the wounds of conspirators.

The Rospigliosi Palace has the much admired fresco of Aurora by Guido. It is painted on the roof of a summer-house, and is still in the finest condition. The drawing and colouring are exquisite. Raphael Morghen has engraved it beautifully, although the print falls far short of the original.

Two days ago I made an attempt to go out to Tivoli, but was obliged to return in consequence of rainy, thick weather; and I regret my limited stay will not permit me to indulge

the hope of seeing its beautiful temples and waterfalls. The changes in the weather are sometimes very sudden at this season. After the most brilliant sunshine and broiling atmosphere, I have witnessed a rapid alteration to thick, cold rains of two days' continuance.

I wished to have offered some remarks on the character of the Romans, but as I coincide with Forsyth in all he has said on the subject, I prefer quoting some of his sensible opinions. He very justly observes, "the national character is the most ruined thing in Rome. The very name of Roman becomes a burden on the people who now bear it, by suggesting comparisons which are perhaps unfair. Men, in the mass, are what government makes them, and who can now calculate the powers of the present race if differently directed? They inherit at least one characteristic of their republican ancestors, that local pride which Rome has always excited in its natives.

"The common people, though timidly cautious in common transactions, are desperate at play. This passion pervading every rank, finds all the lotteries of Italy open at Rome.

"In their quarrels I never saw any approach to fair fighting. Boys fly to stones, and men to the clasp-knife; but the bloodiest ruffian abstains from fire-arms. To shoot your enemy is held atrocious; to plunge a stiletto into his back, a proof of spirit."

"In ascending to the other ranks, I can hardly consider that urbanity which prevails here as any great merit at Rome. The weak composition of the Roman court, its dependence on so many States, the resort of great and accomplished strangers, the subsistence which the people derive from their expenditure, make courtesy an obligation on all. In no part of Italy are the converzationi more elegant, more various, or more free from aristocratical stiffness.

"Whether general gaiety, or literature, or the arts, gaming, or music, or politics, or buffoonery be your object, in one house or other you may be gratified every evening. Whatever be your pretensions, here they will be fully allowed.

"Rome is a market well stocked with the 'commodity of good names.' Praise you may command even to a surfeit, provided you repay it; for they flatter only on the same fair terms as

the people louse each other in the streets—scratch for scratch."

"The Roman ladies are more indebted to nature than to man. Their general style of beauty is large, like the Juno; and their forms, though luxuriant, are so perfect in proportion, that a critic is driven to their feet before he can find a defect. Animation of feature, dignity of gesture, a language all music, quickness of remark, a fine tinge of religion, every female attraction is theirs, except, perhaps, the best. But, alas! can modesty be expected, in a state where celibacy sits enthroned, and fills every post of authority or instruction? Must not the interest, the animal wants of the governors discourage fidelity in the sex? Must not a government of priests, from necessity, form a nation of libertines?"

"When dazzled with the splendour of the Roman clergy, through all their gradation of colour—grey, black, purple, scarlet, up to the sovereign white; when we have admired their palaces, their liveries, their carriages wheeled out in rows to be admired,—let us then reverse the medal, and view the exhaustion which this gross plethora of clerical wealth leaves below

it. Let us survey the forms of misery, the sickness, the sores, the deformity, the hunger which infest the streets, where every beggar is distinguished by his own attitude, tone, and variety of the pathetic, while all together present a strange climax of wretchedness."

It is truly deplorable for a free-born Englishman to behold the Roman Catholic Church monopolizing the conscience of the majority of the finest nations in Europe. The very learning of its priests is a false consolation to millions of their poor, deluded flocks, while the people are deprived of their liberties, equal laws, and all local and commercial advantages. They are oppressed and impoverished in every possible way, for the purpose of adding strength and means to their rulers.

The dawn of a wholesome freedom and philosophical enquiry is now spread over France, and her glorious charter has already given to Frenchmen more solid advantages than all the boasted victories of Napoleon. The British constitution is the sun of political freedom, from whose rays the French charter has emanated; and I trust the day is not distant, when the

degraded inhabitants of other European governments may enjoy those inestimable blessings which flow from free institutions.

There is a great lack of public amusements at Rome, except during the carnival, when operas, plays, masking, and revelry are the order of the day and night. I was tolerably well amused a few nights since by witnessing one of Goldoni's comedies, very well cast, at the theatre of La Valle; but only think of their commencing the performance at ten. That hour may do very well for the lazy Romans, who slumber during one half of the day. It will never answer after a man is moving about all day, as in my case. As a proof of it, I fell asleep before the play was half over, in spite of some clever acting.

After all, Rome is not dependent on amusements. It is a grand theatre for melancholy yet pleasing retrospect, for calling up associations of those brilliant and glorious events which have passed down the silent stream of time!

It is the hallowed land that wooes philosophers and poets to its bosom; and attracts men

of genius, who resort to its unrivalled stores of ancient art for that inspiration which created a Flaxman, a Canova, and a Thorwalsden.

The splendour of the Catholic Church is in all its glory at Easter. It is at that season that you have an opportunity of beholding the noble interior of St. Peter's lighted by a single cross. Thousands of every rank and nation resort to Rome in the holy week, to be present at the sublime and touching ceremony of the Passion. It is generally allowed that nothing can reach the overpowering effect of the pause at the words "Christus est mortuus," and the breaking of the solemn silence with the tender sounds of the Miserere rising softly on the ear, and gradually swelling into the most sublime harmony.

I have taken a seat in a vettura for Naples, and shall take my departure in two days.

As it is my wish to give you some notion of the state of modern art in this resort of all nations, I shall endeavour to send you a few remarks on the subject previous to my bidding adieu to the everlasting city.

LETTER XX.

Present State of Painting and Sculpture at Rome.—Flaxman's Works.—Camuccini.—Canova's Works.—Thorwalsden.—His Studii.—British Sculptors at Rome.—Ascent to the Ball of St. Peter's.

ROME, 1st June, 1824.

A GREAT number of artists from all countries are constantly studying at Rome, although very few eminent painters are willing to make it their permanent residence *. It is a pilgrimage they are most willing to make for the purpose of studying those unrivalled antique statues which adorn the Vatican, and the wonderful frescos and masterpieces of Michael Angelo and Raphael; and for gazing in rapturous ad-

* The German artists who are residing here are very talented and studious. They discriminate well in selecting their models. I visited two of their studii, where I saw a few admirable copies from Raphael's works, and some masterly designs full of the proper sort of feeling.

miration at those picturesque combinations of classical ruins and aged trees which grace the soil of ancient Rome.

With sculptors the case is often different, as their settling here is attended with so many decided advantages,—such as the easy access to the Vatican, the facility of procuring living models, and the superiority of the climate for modelling. Besides these, Rome has become a great mart for sculpture; and all the best sculptors are constantly employed by foreign sovereigns and rich collectors.

Roman artists of any celebrity are extremely rare; and all local advantages appear to be insufficient to elicit that latent talent which we might expect to find among the natives. England holds a decided pre-eminence in the fine arts. Her free government and wealth stimulate and bring forward those men of genius and talent whose works are the admiration of Europe. There is but one Wilkie in the world; and where shall we find another Lawrence or Turner? In sculpture, I shall venture to assert that Flaxman stands higher than any man. His designs are always appropriate, and he throws an epic grandeur, breadth and variety

into his compositions, peculiarly his own, which show how much our worthy countryman gained by being so many years amidst the great works of this city.

Camuccini is considered the best living historical painter of Italy. His outline is exquisite; yet it is evident he has studied too much from marble, and by far too little from nature. Those of his pictures which I saw, appeared to be too much laboured. All the figures were wonderfully like statues, or lay models; and as to his colouring, it is crude and unnatural. On the whole, I would say that Signor Camuccini is very inferior to Etty, Stothard, or Haydon.

Camuccini is a picture-dealer, and has a small collection of the old masters, which is rather choice and valuable. I was much charmed with a cabinet picture of a Saint kneeling, by Ludovico Carracci, which is full of tenderness; also with Guido's Crucifixion, and two masterly portraits by Titian.

I have received a good deal of attention from Mr. Trentenove, who is an Italian sculptor of some celebrity; and also from our townsman, Campbell, who is doing wonders here. Mr. Trentenove was at considerable pains to point

out every statue of merit in the principal studii. I have seen all the best works recently finished or in progress.

It was melancholy to enter the late amiable Canova's studio, which is no longer graced by that master genius, who delighted all his visitors by kindness and condescension. Canova's bust was the first object we saw. I was greatly pleased with some fine models. The Graces have exquisite forms, and are beautifully grouped; but the heads, and disposition of the hands, are, perhaps, not quite so good. Endymion asleep, with his dog beside him, is a figure of great loveliness and finish,—probably one of Canova's best works. Madame Mere, seated, and the Princess Esterhazy, are two figures which combine, in a happy manner, ease with dignity. A colossal figure of Napoleon, naked, with a small figure of Victory in the right hand, is full of the hero. The marble statue of it was executed for the Duke of Wellington. A bas-relief of a family weeping over a father's dead body, a late Neapolitan nobleman: a charming group, and Canova's last work;—a singular coincidence.

From the studio of the late Canova we walked

to that of Thorwalsden. I was introduced to him by Trentenove; and I found him a man of the most agreeable and unassuming character. Although he kindly offered to walk with us through his three studii, we would not hear of his leaving the model upon which he was occupied. The frieze of the triumph of Alexander the Great is considered the work which gained Thorwalsden his fame as a sculptor. Napoleon ordered it for the Quirinal Palace; but before the frieze was half finished, the emperor's career terminated, and the order was left on the sculptor's hands. This frieze is beautiful in the highest degree, and makes a near approach to the antique.

I was quite charmed with the following marble statues, which are finished:—

Venus holding the apple.

A Shepherd-boy seated on a rock with his dog; full of nature.

Two colossal figures of Warriors.

The bassi-relievi of Day and Night are most beautiful, original specimens; and there is an extremely delightful composition in progress, of Cupid wounding the Poet.

I have seen the works of Campbell and Gib-

son, which are excellent. The marble busts of the former are generally very successful likenesses, and carefully finished.

Mr. Gibson has lately finished an admirable work in marble, of Mars and Cupid, which is for the Duke of Devonshire.

On Sunday last I dined with Mr. Campbell and a few friends, at one of the rustic taverns near the Villa Poniatowsky. Count S. was one of the party. He is a man of science, and was one of the discoverers of the famous Phigalian friezes in Greece. After our repast, we had a delightful ramble in the pretty grounds of the Villa; and we enjoyed a splendid view of St. Peter's, the Vatican, and part of Rome from one of the heights.

I finished this day's ramble by ascending to the ball on the top of St. Peter's. You will readily imagine the glorious prospect from such a height. But the day was rather unsettled and hazy, which destroyed the beauty of the whole scene. The time that was occupied in ascending and descending was thirty minutes.

LETTER XXI.

Departure from Rome for Naples.—Remarks on the Journey.—Arrival in Naples.

NAPLES, 5th June, 1824.

I FOUND it difficult to tear myself from Rome after a sojourn of only thirteen days, which affords little more than time to trace the imperfect outlines of the ancient city, and to examine those noble masses of ruins which are yet so full of intense interest amidst their crumbling magnificence.

During that short period, I had merely an opportunity of running from one object to another, and to forego the gratification of witnessing much that was interesting, purely to avoid being perplexed with that confusion which would arise by crowding the mind with more than it could conveniently arrange for agreeable retrospection.

On the 2d instant I left Rome at seven in the morning by the Via Appia. It would certainly be somewhat difficult to describe the emotions I felt when I saw St. Peter's for the last time, and while we winded slowly past the Forum and the Via Sacra, where the glory of early Rome daily crumbles, and the sacred dust alone remains in some places where solid temples once stood. Words are wanting to describe the effect produced by the streams of the morning sun over the elliptic mass of the Coliseum, where the most profound silence prevailed! On losing sight of its ponderous walls, every vestige of Rome disappeared.

At Albano I alighted with a passenger, to enjoy the prospect of the beautiful Alban Lake, so translucid, as if Nature intended it for a mirror in which to admire her own charms, that have been so lavishly bestowed around. The gardens and fine old trees run down to its very surface, and bathe their branches in the water, —forming the most picturesque sylvan scene that can be conceived. We soon afterwards saw those old cones, the reputed tomb of the Horatii and Curiatii. A little further on is the classical region of Aricia, now called La Riccia,

from whose wooded hill is seen the scene of a great part of the Æneid, where the country is clothed with olive-groves, vines, and the graceful laurel. Our slow machine arrived about six in the evening at Velletri for the night.

While supper was preparing, I strolled through the town with one of our party, who told me he was a French student in painting at Rome. After seeing the Palace, which makes a conspicuous figure, and the rich country that surrounds the Pontine Marshes, we were summoned to supper, which we found execrable. To make amends, I got a tolerable bed and a comfortable sleep.

At sunrise on the following morning, we commenced the journey through the Pontine Marshes, at Tre Ponti. The country is but very partially drained by means of the canal cut close to the public road. The mountain streams and rains constantly feed these marshes which, it is said, require a deeper canal, besides a corresponding one at the base of the Apennines, to draw off all impurities. Some beautiful orange groves, vineyards, and lofty palm-trees, are spread over the plains.

The situation of Terracina on the sea is

striking; but, on entering it, the charm is broken, as misery is seen depicted on the countenances of the inhabitants, who live in the most forlorn poverty. The style in which the young women there dress the hair is simple and elegant, being plaited and tied up in curves to the top of the head with ribbons, while a long, thick ornamental pin is stuck among the folds.

Terracina is erected on the site of ancient Anxur, and there are some curious ruins on its heights.

The remains of Theodoric's Palace lie scattered on the brow of a hill, above the town, that commands an excellent prospect of the surrounding district and several villages perched on rocky eminences.

The Cathedral is reared on the ruins of an ancient temple. Its fluted columns and pulpit of marble are worthy of examination, but the church is a strange compound of orders.

The Pontine Marshes are twenty-four miles in length, occasionally twelve broad; and they terminate at Terracina. They seem to be filled with rich pasture, if I may judge from the droves of buffalos and numerous flocks of goats

and sheep which were feeding on the borders of the canal.

The third day brought us into the Neapolitan dominions, six miles beyond Terracina. We passed a tomb and aqueduct, in ruins,—some picturesque scenery, and fields teeming with corn, olives, vines, myrtles, &c.; and after performing the distance of thirty miles, our vetturino put up for the night at a lonely mountain inn, among gardens and vineyards. We had no reason to regret our halt, as we were extremely well treated.

This forenoon brought us to Capua, in the middle of a highly cultivated country. It is built on the banks of the river Volturno, a mile and a half from ancient Capua.

There is a noble road from hence to Naples, lined with tall elms, poplars, and wild aloes. The fields are like a garden; but the numerous peasants employed in their cultivation live in villages built on the ridges of the Apennines, as malaria is generated from the exhalations of the low grounds. A number of people are now cutting down barley, and the harvest will be completed in ten days. No view of either the city or bay can be had from this road. Nu-

merous carriages, market-people, and importunate beggars, however, gave indications of the immediate approach to a populous city. We presently found ourselves in the crowded Strada di Toledo, the principal street in Naples, which contains many noble houses. The irregular crowds, bustle, noise, and mixture of character there are beyond anything I have seen.

It is now moonlight. I have just returned from the Mole, where the sea-breeze was delightful. Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples were thus seen, for the first time, under the moon's calm and soothing influence.

I forgot to mention that the Roman and Neapolitan territories are still infested by formidable bands of brigands, which are the terror of travellers. We found armed men during the journey posted on the road within sight of each other, for the protection of travellers; and for our additional security two dragoons accompanied the carriage, but their courage was fortunately not put to the test.

LETTER XXII.

General Description of Naples.—The Bay.—Churches.—Excursion to Virgil's Tomb, Pausilippo, Baiæ, &c.

NAPLES, 8th June, 1824.

NAPLES is the city beloved by poets and painters; and the resort of travellers from all lands, whether philosophers, lovers of the arts, invalids, or idlers. The superiority of its climate, the romantic beauty of its scenery, and the extraordinary natural productions of its teeming soil, were all causes which attracted to its sunny shores the illustrious of ancient times, and made the land the chosen seat of Virgil for the sublimest poetical fictions ever composed. The Italians consider there is nothing on earth like Naples,—that if any place can be styled Paradise, it lies here; and hence arises their common saying, "Vedi Napoli, e poi mori," "See Naples, and die."

I shall attempt no particular descriptions, as they are to be found in a thousand different shapes. I shall only make a few remarks on those objects which come under my view, and the impressions they leave at the moment.

This city, as a residence, has been perhaps overrated. It appears to be built after no regular design; and the streets—with the exception of the Toledo, Largo del Castello, St. Lucia, and perhaps one or two more—are narrow and dark. The architecture of the churches, palaces, and public buildings makes no approach to the grandeur or elegance of those at Rome; yet one cannot help being struck with the noble sites of many of the flat-roofed buildings covered with flowers, hanging gardens, and irregular streets winding over each other in an infinity of picturesque shapes.

The splendid situation of Naples, and the singular variety of its scenery, natural productions, and antiquities, make ample amends for its architectural defects in the eyes of the scholar, geologist, antiquary, or painter. The city lies on the acclivity of a tufo mountain, where a volcano is supposed to have once poured forth its fires. Many centuries previous to the Christian

era, a town stood on the same place, which the Phœnicians styled Parthenope, from the inviting beauty of the situation.

I had no correct idea of the magnificence of the Bay, or the amphitheatrical majesty of Naples, until I sailed out in a boat a few miles from the Mole before breakfast. Having thus emerged from the noise of the harbour, I turned round upon the city towering in glittering pride above the clear blue sea almost unruffled. The view was illumined in that manner which just suits the painter, as the character of the buildings was brought out in broad masses of light and shade by the morning rays pouring forth from a pure sky, while the Mole, with its Pharos, the shipping, the Castel del Ovo, the vessels with hoisted sails awaiting the expected breeze, and the patient fishermen watching their nets, were all reflected in the still bay. To the right of this scene I traced in succession Portici, Resina, and Vesuvius, partially covered with thin clouds; with Castellamare glittering among woods, Vico, and the bold curious Promontory of Sorrento that terminates the bay. Further to the south, the Isle of Capri appeared, full of vineyards and crowned with a town

reared on its highest point. On the left of my station, to the west of Naples, were the tufo inequalities of Pausilippo, with its perforated gallery, leading to Pozzuoli, abounding in hot springs and vapours; and the classic shores of Baiæ. The Promontory of Miseno is the western extremity of the Bay; and a little further to the south-west are the two fine, healthy, populous islands of Procida and Ischia.

Since my arrival here, I have generally devoted a portion of each day to seeing the different quarters of the town; and after an early dinner I sometimes hire a calash to convey me to various parts of the delightful environs. This carriage is of various shapes, gaudily painted and gilt. It is drawn by one horse, and will accommodate only a single person with any comfort, with the driver behind. The reins are placed in the hands of the passenger, while the driver does not spare the whip. It is a rapid and cheap conveyance, well adapted for a stranger's convenience whose time is limited.

I have attended at the Church of San Gennaro on Sunday, and at the celebration of a religious festival, on both of which occasions it was extremely crowded. It is an erection of the thir-

teenth century. A hundred years afterwards it was much injured by an earthquake; and although originally of the Gothic order, the extensive repairs have so altered its appearance, that numerous parts of the design have been obliterated. The interior has an imposing appearance, and rests upon a hundred columns of granite. Many of the altars are very costly and beautiful, and the gilding of some of the ornamental parts is rich. This sanctuary is held in great reverence by the credulous multitude.

It is believed that the body of St. Januarius is deposited here under a rotunda supported by forty-two marble columns; and as the story goes, an ounce of that blessed saint's blood is preserved in a phial, which retains its original vital colour, weight, and fluidity. Religious jugglers draw together the enthralled multitude three times in the year, to witness the liquefying of the tutelar saint's precious blood. If it is readily liquefied, good fortune is anticipated; but should any delay attend the operation, tears are shed, and prayers are offered up for the safety of the Neapolitans.

The churches are numerous, although few of

them display any purity of design or grandeur of style. Their interior is generally loaded with wretched images, tasteless gilding, and gaudy ornaments. As Forsyth judiciously remarks, "within they are spotted things, mere harlequins in marble, quite ugly with decoration."

Santa Maria della Pietà is a church which contains some rare marbles of exquisite beauty; also three statues of Modesty, Vice, and a dead Christ of considerable merit. That of Modesty is covered with a veil, and extremely well executed.

I was lately much delighted with an early visit to the church of St. Martin, beautifully situated on Monte Vomero. Mr. St. L., who proposed it to me, having ordered a carriage to call for us, we went there before breakfast. This church was formerly attached to the rich Certosini convent, now converted into a military hospital. The interior is composed of the most beautiful marbles, and it contains a great variety of paintings by different masters. The ceiling and upper part of the nave are painted with considerable depth of colour and spirit by

Lanfranco and Spagnoletto. The twelve Prophets, by the latter, possess both originality and merit. Behind the high altar there is an unfinished picture of the Nativity, attributed to Guido. The various small chapels are filled with the works of Carlo Maratti, Matteis, Massimo, &c. In the sacristy there is a work of great relief by M. A. Caravaggio, of Peter denying Christ.

From the gardens attached to the hospital we enjoyed a singularly interesting prospect. The town and its extended suburbs were stretched under us at such a distance as to contract the widest streets into narrow lanes. The ships at the Mole were like so many cock-boats, while the muscular lazzaroni at work on the quay appeared as mere pigmies. The blue waters of the bay were curled by a gentle breeze which was wafting vessels from different quarters into port. To the westward is Capo di Monte, another noble height, with the luxuriant Campagna Felice beyond it; and in an eastern direction the Apennines shew themselves, with Vesuvius in their front. Such is the glorious view which we enjoyed in a clear,

sunny morning, from one of the most remarkable and beautiful elevations of this lofty capital.

Yesterday was a day that cannot be readily forgotten, as it was devoted to exploring a great part of the scene described in the sixth book of the Æneid.

On the left of the entrance to Pausilippo's Grotto is the reputed ruin of Virgil's Tomb. One cannot help regretting its being a moot point, for where could any spot have been found so appropriate for the inurning of Virgil's hallowed remains, as that which is at the very opening of the glorious scene described in the middle of the Æneid, where, Delille observes, the soul of Socrates and the genius of Plato breathe in the poet's verses? After crossing through a garden at the top of a road to the left of the grotto I arrived at Virgil's Tomb. It is a simple piece of masonry of a cylindrical form on a square base, and in the interior are ten niches for cinerary urns. The ruin is now a mere void. It contains the Latin inscription, although the cupola and overhanging bay tree are gone.

The grotto of Pausilippo, scooped from the

hardened volcanic sand, is half a mile in length. The breadth is about twenty-two feet, and its height from fifty to eighty feet. Two large funnels are bored through the top of the grotto, about half-way through this passage, so as to admit light and air, although it is deficient in both. Lamps are kept constantly burning to supply the defect of the former, but the damp, disagreeable air is very sensibly felt and will not be easily remedied.

Beyond the extremity of this cavern, at a few miles' distance, is the town of Pozzuoli, (formerly called Dicæarchia,) surrounded by exhausted craters,—a country full of natural wonders, and many remains of the magnificence of the ancient Romans.

In order to visit the various scenes described by Virgil, it is necessary to hire a boat at Pozzuoli; and it will be superfluous to remark how totally inferior they appear when compared with the poet's sublime imaginings. But we must bear in mind that much of the surface of the country has been destroyed or materially altered since Virgil's time by the most dreadful convulsions of nature. Not far from Pozzuoli, on the opposite side of a small bay, is the Lu-

crine Lake, which has been partly covered by a mountain ejected from a volcano. Hence is a path which leads to Avernus, whose gloomy horrors no more exist. Birds no longer perish in flying over its surface; and smiling cultivation meets the eye instead of the dark woods of the surrounding banks.

To the grotto of the Cumean Sibyl the visitor is conducted through a pleasant shaded path, and by the assistance of lighted torches the baths of the Sibyl are explored. The imagination is now left to penetrate the dreary realms of chaos and the burning waters of Phlegethon, whither the prophetess conducted Æneas amidst silence and the shades of night to the infernal regions. The surrounding shore of Baiæ is covered with the ruins of ancient temples, the villas of Nero, Cæsar, Marius, Lucullus, &c.; —but how are the mighty fallen!

LETTER XXIII.

Ascent of Vesuvius by Moonlight.—Description of the Crater.—Sunrise and effect of the Bay of Naples, the City, and surrounding Scenery.—Visit to Pompeii.

NAPLES, 12th June, 1824.

AT this glowing season it is customary for the citizens of Naples to emerge from their houses a little before sunset, to enjoy the sea-breeze on the Mole or in the Chiaja Gardens, while the nobles and richer classes roll along in their gay equipages; and as the majority of both ranks sleep during a part of the day, when Englishmen and dogs only scorch themselves, a like portion of the night is taken for perambulating the streets or attending the theatres and gaming-tables.

In the Neapolitan the love for music is intense, as the poorest man that works for a scanty subsistence will rather go half-fed than deny himself the pleasure of attending the

opera, and of criticising afterwards the merits of both singers and composers over his macaroni.

Mr. Bocaccio, a fellow lodger, and myself, were amused last night while sitting in a caffè listening to the eulogiums of one of these critics on the representation of "L'Ultimo Giorno di Pompeii," which led us into a conversation on Vesuvius, when I expressed my regret at not having yet seen that remarkable mountain; and before we finished our coffee, it was arranged that we should set out there in a few hours. We were now joined by a German, a friend of Mr. Bocaccio, who agreed to make one of the party, and a carroziere with three horses was immediately hired, which came for us at the caffè a little after midnight.

After clearing the city and crossing the bridge of Madelana, the carriage soon rolled over the buried ruins of Herculaneum; and on reaching the village of Resina, four miles from Naples, we hired three asses, which were soon saddled for us, to make the ascent of Vesuvius. The stillness of the hour was broken only by the barking of a few disturbed curs and the earnest loquacity of the guides. A clear moon

lighted up our winding path among vineyards and cottages surrounded by gardens, where the mulberry-tree grows in great luxuriance. Huge solid blocks of lava, which in their original ignited state had destroyed the soil, now formed a protection to it in its revived condition, lava being used in the construction of walls to protect gardens and vineyards in all parts of the mountain. We had now ridden two miles, when we reached a bed of lava. Our little animals bore us through every inequality, clambering over large masses in various places which appeared to be insurmountable. Before reaching the hermitage, the road is cut through twelve strata of ashes; and it was curious to observe the caution of the poor ass in feeling its steps in this rugged part of the mountain. Floating clouds occasionally enveloped us or rolled across the road; and a dense vapour at one time concealed the winding track that seemed to enter the very clouds for several minutes, producing a most singular effect.

Before day-break we arrived at the last dwelling on the mountain, called the Hermitage, a simple construction, two stories high, with a small chapel attached. It is inhabited

by a few harmless friars, who receive frequent calls not only from the visitors of Vesuvius, but from the villagers and cultivators of the vines around Monte Somma. The friars possess a vineyard of some celebrity, from whose grape the Lacrima Christi wine is made. A delightful view of the bay of Naples can be enjoyed from this spot, and the moon's pale light gave a peculiar solemnity to the whole scene around the Hermitage. Although the holy men were still in the enjoyment of soft slumbers, we soon aroused one of them, who popped his head out at the window to make sure we were not thieves, and after a trifling delay gave us admission. On expressing a desire to taste some Lacrima Christi, a bottle of it was placed before us, which, with some bread and cheese, we relished very much after our ride. We speedily remounted our beasts, rode over a flat ridge nearly three quarters of a mile in length, descended gradually from it into a valley covered with blocks of lava and ashes, and after reaching the foot of the cone we dismounted. Daybreak now disclosed the desolate scene of volcanic matter spread in masses of various colours over the mountain and the valley, between its

base and the sea. Verdure and vines, which have come into existence on different parts of the lava-clad mountain, might be compared to islands surrounded by rivers winding round their emerald borders. We now stood on the brow of the crater, knee-deep in ashes, on exhausted materials of liquid fire which destroyed men and cities in its resistless descent, and made a passage into the sea before its fury was arrested.

After climbing up the cone, made nearly perpendicular by the eruption in 1822, assisted by long staves, and occasionally on our knees, we reached the rim of the crater, a rugged, indented path, composed of lava and ashes; and the time occupied in the ascent from Resina, a distance of nearly three miles, was upwards of two hours and a half, including the delay at the Hermitage. Heavy clouds filled the crater, which is two miles and a half in circumference, and more than two hundred feet deep, and the rising sun was obscured by a dense vapour. The clouds, however, soon ascended, and for a few seconds displayed the bottom of the rugged interior, where a small cone to the right of our position occasionally emitted a yellowish flame,

followed by showers of stones and scoriæ, which formed a species of burning lake round the base of the cone.

On the rim of the great cone we felt it rather chilly, and on examining my pocket thermometer it had fallen from 70° to 64° of Fahrenheit. Having descended about forty feet into the crater, we reached the beginning of a path that was swept away in the last eruption; and as the state of the weather would not admit of going lower with any safety, we remained stationary for a short time, watching occasional glimpses of the now feeble ebullitions of the fiery gulf, that in former times threw up masses of liquid fire and mountains of stone, which overwhelmed immense tracts of cultivation and buried entire cities in a single night. Besides various eruptions on record since the year seventy-nine, when Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabiæ were buried, the eruption of 1538 is said to have ejected a quantity of matter sufficient to fill the present exhausted crater.

A projecting jagged bank occasionally appeared through the vapour on the opposite side of the crater near the eruption, which resembled the head, body and shoulders of some giant,

and fancy might have turned it into the bogey Cyclops described by the forsaken Achæmenides in the third book of the Æneid.

"Tertia jam Lunæ se cornua lumine complent,
Quum vitam in silvis, inter deserta ferarum
Lustra domosque, traho, vastosque ab rupe Cyclopas
Prospicio, sonitumque pedum vocemque tremisco."

On the rim of the crater there is an echo which repeats three times; we found it most distinct by whistling, and it had a strange effect combined with the rumbling noise that sometimes was heard from the ebullitions of the small interior cone. Although it is about three miles from Resina to the top of Vesuvius, it is only 3904 feet in perpendicular height.

From the scene of volcanic desolation we turned our eyes in the opposite direction upon Naples, and its noble bay, now partially hidden under the floating morning clouds, which gradually disappeared before the rising sun. What a delightful interchange of water, picturesque landscape, and variety of buildings is spread under one's feet from this elevated position!

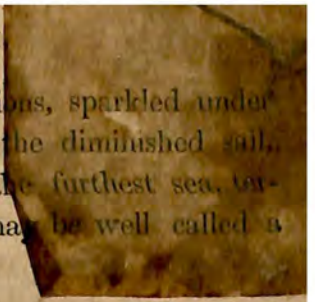
The city itself is an immense amphitheatre,

adorned with every beauty which nature and art could bestow, inclining gently round the centre of the most beautiful bay in the world, which is about twenty-one miles in diameter, from the promontory of Sorrento to that of Miseno. The district which more immediately surrounds Naples, independently of its loveliness and high pictorial beauties, teems with grounds under the highest cultivation, olive groves, vineyards, and gardens, which supply the wants of a town and suburbs containing upwards of 380,000 inhabitants.

The city itself, with its proud castles, towers, churches, streets crowded with palaces piled upon each other, spacious terraces covered with flowers, hanging gardens,—the projecting mole on the smooth blue surface of the bay,—and the quays surrounded by shipping, were all at this early hour thrown into grand and distinct masses of light and shade. The bay bore on its bosom numerous felucas and fishing vessels, while Capri, Procida, and Ischia enhanced the singular beauty of the whole scene, from the fine manner in which Nature has scattered those islands over the opening of the bay.

Baiæ's sunny shores, the land of classic lore

and of Virgil's sublime fictions, sparkled under the new-born day, while the diminished sail, a mere shining speck on the furthest sea, terminated a prospect that may be well called a terrestrial paradise.



"Here Nature loved to trace,
As if for gods, a dwelling place." *

After roasting some eggs among the hot ashes, we joined them to our bread, cheese, and wine, brought up from the Hermitage, which served us for breakfast. Immediately afterwards we descended the cone to the valley, and mounted our animals, which with great alacrity ambled down with their respective burdens to their stable at Resina. The carriage being in readiness, we proceeded to Pompeii, which lies some miles to the east of the mountain's base. On reaching the ruined city, we descended through a gateway into a small square, with houses fronted by a Doric colonnade, built of bricks coated with a hard composition. The rooms are from ten to fifteen feet wide, and about eighteen feet long; they are supposed to

* Byron.

have been occupied as barracks, as arms were found in one of the chambers when it was cleared of the ashes at the excavation. A little further is a splendid amphitheatre, built on simple arches. We descended into its arena by an inclined passage, and I was much struck by its handsome form and fine preservation. It is said to have accommodated 12,000 persons at the barbarous exhibitions of gladiators, &c.

Near this spot are some fine fragments of a temple dedicated to Isis. Judging from the beautiful remains, it must have been an elegant building.

There is a small theatre of an elliptic form, with its orchestra distinctly marked, with seats of polished marble for the audience. Tragedy was there enacted during the day, and Comedy was played at night in another theatre on the opposite side of the road; so that it would seem in those days Thalia and Melpomene could not keep house together.

The Forum is very capacious, surrounded by rows of broken marble columns, several mutilated statues and busts.

The Street of Tombs is on ground a little ele-

vated. There is a curious basso relievo in marble on the tomb of Diomede; and on the tombs of the gladiators discovered in 1812 are other bassi relievi representing various combats.

In one of the more humble dwellings which we entered were some large jars, which were probably used for holding oil, of which the ancients had always a plentiful supply for various purposes of domestic economy; and in another house, an oven with its chimney and grinding stones for corn is still standing. The houses have most scanty accommodation, and the rooms are extremely small, with low ceilings. The inhabitants must have been greatly annoyed during the heat of summer, as the apartments are so confined that they might be called mere human cages.

Those buildings which have a court in the centre are called palaces, and they seem to have been handsomely finished. Many of these have curious mosaic pavements, and paintings in fresco on the walls of some of the rooms of considerable beauty and freshness of colour. One, which appeared to be an assemblage of the gods, is beautiful and in excellent preservation. On the pavements in front of some houses are

represented animals composed of different pieces of coloured marble. The streets are paved with round blocks of lava, and they are generally narrow, with a raised side pavement for pedestrians.

Engravings of all the monuments at Pompeii have been executed in France, and a French architect is now taking plans and drawings of every street of the unveiled city, which are to be engraved, accompanied with letter press.

The sun descending on the other side of Vesuvius warned us to leave this dreary spot. We therefore mounted our carriage, and at some miles from Naples we stopped to take dinner at an albergo, where the entertainment was of the worst kind. To make some amends, we regaled ourselves at a caffè in the Strada di Toledo, where we alighted at half past seven o'clock in the evening; and we talked over the interesting objects examined in the course of a well spent night and day.

LETTER XXIV.

Royal Palace.—The Mole.—Religious Festival.—Museo Borbonico; its Pictures and Statues.—Ambassador's Conversazione.—San Carlo and other Theatres.—Observations.

NAPLES, 21st June, 1824.

THE Royal Palace has no particular architectural attractions; it is after Fontana's design, but was never completed. Its court is spacious and well adapted for state occasions; and the ample staircase is extremely commodious. In rear of the palace, and not far from the Mole, is the Castel Nuovo, a noble fortress, and capable of making a considerable resistance against an enemy. The Mole is a very delightful promenade, and a convenient resort, from its easy access, for the citizens; and all classes are to be seen there towards sunset inhaling the pure air from the bay. The various views of Vesuvius and the coast from the Mole

are enchanting; and from the gallery of the light-house one can enjoy a fine panoramic prospect of some extent.

The Mole and adjoining streets are lined with stalls of the venders of macaroni, fish, fruit, iced water, wine, &c. All the operations of the kitchen are carried on in the open streets, for the accommodation of the lower orders. Macaroni is a staple commodity here, and the favourite food of the people. Naples has been long celebrated for its manufacture, which is of a superior and nutritious quality. One of the amusing sights in this land of fun is to witness the lazzaroni, sailors, &c., taking their dinner round the macaroni stall. They lift long pieces of macaroni between the thumb and fingers, which are slipped down the gullet with uncommon despatch, while the head is thrown a little backwards to receive the rapid succession of appliances. A little weak wine or water, with an occasional pipe of tobacco, is taken afterwards. Each man then, according to the sailor's phrase, feels for the softest plank, whereon he stretches his limbs, to enjoy a nap ad libitum, al fresco. The joyous temperament of

the multitude does not appear to reach its acme before the evening.

Although I lose much of the drollery uttered by the swarthy sons of labour when they are freed from their daily toils, yet I derive considerable amusement without understanding il dialetto Napolitano, from the gesticulation, grimace, and various exhibitions of humour on the Mole, particularly during festas, which are frequent. The Mole and the neighbouring streets are on those occasions covered with a vociferous throng. The ears are assailed by the shrill trumpets of raree-showmen, the loud harangues of mountebanks in uniform, the eloquence of Mr. Punch, a man of consequence among the lazzaroni; while the attention is kept continually on the alert by every kind of buffoonery and tricks of the countless professori who live on the superfluous funds of the good-natured crowd. As yesterday happened to be the festival of a Madonna, I witnessed all the excitement it created among men, women, and children.

The Neapolitan females, who have generally ordinary faces and clumsy figures, are fond of

being dressed in the most gaudy taste. I allude more particularly to the lower classes, whose occupations during a holiday are riding through the streets in a calash or other vehicle, making all kinds of hideous noises, and dancing.

In the latter amusement both sexes often display a good deal of grace; and in their favourite dance of the Tarantula I have frequently admired their agility as well as strength.

What a change has been produced in the taste and dispositions of the Neapolitans since those glorious ancient days, when their coasts were occupied by the pure Greeks!

During the early part of yesterday's festival, temporary altars were constructed in the Toledo. Pictures of the Madonna were hung in front, and many thousands of the assembled devotees knelt upon the dusty street during the performance of a religious mummery. The afternoon they spent in riding, walking through various streets, and dancing. A band of musicians occupied a large orchestra which covered the bottom of a street that joins the Toledo. There the night was consumed in revelry; but I must add to their credit, that good humour prevailed amongst the motley

throng, while inebriety appeared to be a stranger to all assembled.

Many privations are willingly endured by the poorer classes, to enable them to participate in the show, glitter, and excitement of a church festival; and the hard earned savings of many weeks are, on such an occasion, transferred from their pockets to those of priests, postilions, showmen, and cooks.

It is now time to say something of the Museo Borbonico, which contains the public gallery of painting and sculpture. This spacious edifice, formerly used as the national academy, was converted to its present purpose in 1790. The collection of pictures is neither good nor extensive; and after the encomiums which I heard bestowed on it, I was quite disappointed.

I shall mention the few which pleased me most, although my misgivings are strong as to their being genuine. Danäe in the Golden Shower; Titian. A nymph and satyr; Annibale Caracci. A dead Christ; Annibale Caracci. Holy Family; Raphael. Virgin and Child; Ditto. Copy of Last Judgment by Michael Angelo; a pupil. A dead Christ; Corregio. The Madonna and our Saviour, with a rabbit;

Ditto. A guardian angel shielding a child; Domenichino. Rinaldo and Armida; Annibale Caracci. Leo X. between two Cardinals; Raphael. Two children laughing; Parmigiano. Charity; Schidone.

The pavements of different halls are composed of curious mosaics and marbles brought from Pompeii and Herculaneum. This establishment can boast of possessing some of the noblest specimens of Grecian antiquities brought to light at ancient Capua, Pæstum, Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Rome. The marble busts and equestrian statues of the Balbi family, from Herculaneum, are exquisite specimens, in fine preservation.

In the first division are busts of the mother of Balbus and two young females of the family; also a statue of Marcus N. Balbus; all beautiful. The dying gladiator possesses a vast deal of highly wrought expression in the tottering frame leaning upon the outstretched hand.

On entering the second division, the eye is arrested by two equestrian statues of Marcus N. Balbus, the father, and of M. N. Balbus, the son. What an amazing display of overwhelming force and muscle in mighty repose in the

famed colossal Hercules of Glycon! It was found in Caracalla's baths, and is one of the finest statues ever produced.

Third division. Agrippina, Nero's mother, seated, represented listening to her unnatural son's sentence of death. Despair is shewn in her countenance with a moving truth. There are many curious antiques from Herculaneum and Pompeii in this room, but I had not sufficient time to examine them.

Hall of Venuses. Venere Callipiga. She is admiring her own shape, which is exquisite. Some turns of the limbs and back rival the perfection of the Venus de' Medici, but, unfortunately, more than half of the figure is a restoration. The Hermaphrodite is another attraction.

Hall of Flora. Her own colossal statue in pure marble, from the baths of Caracalla, is a work of exquisite beauty. The drapery is finely managed. Torso Farnese is another great specimen of Grecian art. Some fine bassi relievi of gods, goddesses, Scylla, &c.

Hall of Apollo. Colossal porphyry statue of the god, robed. Some fine columns of oriental alabaster from Herculaneum. Other columns of

giallo antico, &c., from Pompeii. A statue of Meleager, in rosso antico.

Hall of the Muses. A Grecian vase of marble, with bold bassi-relievi of the education of Bacchus. Some curious cinerary urns.

Hall of Atlas. Atlas supporting the globe. A philosopher. A draped statue of Aristides in the act of haranguing. In this masterpiece of antiquity the marble almost moves. It was found at Pompeii.

In several apartments there are bronze statues of various merit, candelabra, sacrificial vases, tripods, furniture, ornaments, &c., of the ancients found in various extinct cities. Rooms are appropriated to the curious process of unrolling the scrolls of papyrus discovered at Herculaneum. It was not new to me, as I was introduced to the late Mr. Hayter, at Paris, a few months previous to his death, who shewed me a number of specimens, and was at the trouble of explaining the process;—1700 scrolls have been found. Upwards of 400 of these have been expanded, and about 100 only were legible.

The library contains 100,000 printed vo-

lumes, besides an extensive collection of manuscripts.

The British ambassador gave a conversazione two evenings ago, to which I was invited, and I found it remarkably pleasant and free from restraint. It was very crowded, but the apartments, which are very spacious, opened towards a terrace filled with flowers, where many of the company occasionally walked. I had thus an opportunity of seeing some of the Italian grandees and many genteel English families resident at Naples.

The theatre of San Carlo is most splendid, and brilliantly lighted. The royal box in the centre is supported by a fine imitation of palm trees in burnished gold. The boxes are painted with a deep blue colour. Many of them are furnished with blue satin hangings and mirrors; and the ornaments fixed on the front, in alto relievo, are of burnished gold and silver. The spacious ceiling is painted in a shewy style, and quite à la Française. The vanity of even the "single gentlemen" of the pit is considered, by allotting to each an elbow-chair. By this plan a squeeze is impossible, and an excellent

opportunity is afforded to take an occasional nap during such dull performances as are now given.

Naples is garrisoned by a large Austrian force, which is evidently obnoxious to the inhabitants, who are taxed for their support. The military bands attached to the German regiments are uniformly good; and I have been delighted with their performances in the evening at the Chiaja Gardens, where about forty excellent musicians generally muster. There seems to be but one soul in their concord of sweet sounds, even while playing the most difficult compositions. They form a striking contrast to the generality of the English regimental bands, which are a disgrace to the taste of our fine army.

Last night I went to the Teatro del Fondo, for the purpose of witnessing an opera buffa and seeing the royal family, who were expected to attend. His Neapolitan majesty is punctuality itself, and appeared in the house just as the curtain rose, attended by Prince Ferdinand, his eldest son, and several courtiers. Maria Louisa, Archduchess of Parma, at present on a visit to this court, occupied the next box with

her suite of withered maids of honour and an old squinting German officer, who is said to be her husband. Maria Louisa, I am told, possesses neither talent nor any amiable traits of character. Her appearance is not dignified, and her features are plain, without any sort of animation or sensibility.

The King of Naples is a robust, good-humoured looking old man. He listened very attentively to the whole opera, and occasionally marked the time of passages which seemed to please him.

The Fondo is an elegant theatre, containing five rows of boxes. The pit is fitted up with separate seats, which are numbered and occupied according to corresponding numbered tickets given to visitors at the door. By this excellent regulation, no person can be deprived of a seat at any hour if a ticket is bought beforehand.

At the theatre of the Florentines, Italian comedy is performed two nights in the week. Tragedy is not much relished here, and only performed during Lent, when the Neapolitans assume a gravity very foreign to their natural temperament.

To witness the inhabitants quite at home, a stranger should attend at the performance of Goldoni's plays, or the clever imitations of those invisible monitors who enable active puppets to satirize the follies of the day. The latter are exhibited several times in the course of the afternoon, in a tiny theatre like themselves, to admit of their being distinctly seen and heard. They are irresistibly comic in the variety of their gesticulation and speeches; and should any Englishman require a speedy cure for the spleen, let him go to the theatre of the Burattini.

It would be presumption to give any opinion as to the character and manners of the Neapolitans, after so short a stay amongst them. I have not had time to mix in society if opportunities had offered, and one can form very slight notions of a nation from the conversations in hotels and coffee-houses, where there are often as many foreigners as natives assembled. Nobility and titles abound. They are generally but an empty name, as moral degradation and poverty so frequently follow in their train. Thus, a nobleman or courtier who owns a spacious, ill-furnished palace, may have

little else to boast of, and is glad to spend his few carlini in the crowd of the coffee-house. The poor nobles are forced to live at home in sparing obscurity, and if an occasional feast is given by them, from ostentation, it must be preceded and followed by an enduring abstinence.

I believe that men of science and literary talents are found here among different members of the church, law, and medicine. They meet with that respect and admiration which they deserve; although it cannot be denied that a buffoon, a gambler, or a courtezan more readily succeed in gaining admittance into the highest circles, in which they cannot fail to be prejudicial by their insinuating, degrading, and dangerous arts.

The government is impotent and the country is poor, and by its insignificance is degraded in the political scale of nations. The commercial enterprise of the people is inconsiderable, and the most productive speculations in the interchange of commodities seem to be chiefly in the hands of foreigners. The principal exports at Naples consist of oil, silk, wine, wool, goats' hair, soap, gut strings for musical instruments, macaroni and other fine pastes.

From what I have said you will perceive the Neapolitans possess few inducements for honourable exertion; and men's efforts mainly depend on the éclat or profit which may arise from their exercise. When the debilitating influence of climate, sedentary habits, and miserable education of these swarthy sons of southern Italy are also considered, we can in some measure account for the idleness, sloth, and laxity of morals which exist in this depraved city. A Neapolitan's capabilities are as great as his manners are often engaging and obliging, but circumstances beyond his control too frequently make him necessitous and miserable.

I expected to witness a great deal of want and wretchedness among the lower orders, but was surprised that neither came within my observation. The Lazzaroni are often scantily clad, yet they are robust, healthy, and of a joyous disposition.

They are extremely moderate in their diet, which consists chiefly of macaroni, dried fish, and vegetables; and there is a plentiful and choice supply of provisions in the markets.

How naturally the late David Allan (the Scottish Hogarth) delineated the character and

costumes of the Italians! I have been repeatedly reminded of his Romans at Mass—Calabrian Shepherds—Neapolitan Dance, &c., during my rambles at Rome and Naples. Among the motley throng of this city, and the drolleries on the Mole, the vigilant eye of Allan found an ample range for his happy pencil, which could exhibit with ease and truth the feelings, modes of life, and picturesque appearances of this remarkable land, as well as those of his own Caledonia.

His Majesty's sloop Weazle has arrived in the bay; and as it is expected that our admiral will dispatch her to Malta on the 23d instant, I have some hopes of getting a passage in that vessel direct, instead of going by Sicily, as I intended, if the Weazle had not made her appearance.

LETTER XXV.

Embarkation on board His Majesty's Sloop Weazle for Malta.—Lipari Islands.—Sicily.—Arrival at Malta.—Description of Malta, Valetta, &c.

MALTA, 30th June, 1824.

IN consequence of that liberal spirit and kindness which so eminently belong to the officers of our navy, I was obligingly accommodated with a passage to La Valetta, in His Majesty's sloop Weazle; and, while under quarantine, we sailed from the Bay of Naples about half-past six in the evening of the 23d instant. At half-past three o'clock in the morning of the 25th, I was roused by the officer of the middle-watch, to see Stromboli at a distance pouring forth its unquenchable fires, which have been the beacon of mariners in those seas for ages. The effect of this roaring volcano, during the darkness of the morning, on the undulating sea, was peculiarly striking. A gentle breeze brought us abreast

of Stromboli at eight A.M., when we had an excellent view of the unwearied explosions of its volcano, whose flames were now rendered yellow by the superior brilliancy of day.

The Lipari islands form a beautiful cluster not far from the northern shores of Sicily. They were formerly named Æolian, because the sudden winds which issued from them led the ancient poets to feign that Æolus locked the winds among their caves, which he loosened on the world at his fearful command. The god was propitiously inclined towards us, by wafting our sails with a gentle zephyr, that enabled us to descry his dominions in tranquillity.

The island of Vulcano is the nearest to Sicily, and about twenty miles from its coast. In Virgil's time a volcano probably existed there of a terrific description, as the poet alludes to it in the eighth book of the Æneid.

" Insula Sicanium juxta latus Æoliamque
Erigitur Liparen, fumantibus ardua saxis:
Quam subter specus et Cyclopum exesa caminis
Antra Ætnæa tonant; validique incudibus ictus
Auditi referunt gemitum, striduntque cavernis
Stricturæ Chalybum, et fornacibus ignis anhelat;
Vulcani domus, et Vulcania nomine tellus."

It was there that Vulcan forged the armour of Æneas, at the solicitation of Venus, which is also so admirably described by Virgil.

These islands produce quantities of good fruits, alum, sulphur, and cinnabar. Some delicious wines are also made in several of their vineyards, of which Malvasia is one that is highly esteemed.

At a quarter before seven in the evening we sailed past the Faro of Messina, where the breeze freshened. The whirlpool of the ancient Charybdis was pointed out to me as we glided along our course. It is often very frightful when its waves are driven by a storm against the rocks of Scylla on the Calabrian shore; and in the times of old, when navigation was in its infancy, that strait was the terror of mariners, as well as the subject of many poetical amplifications.

The whole of the coast round Messina was strongly fortified by English engineers during the last war. Messina lies in the Val-di-Demona, and possesses a noble harbour, of great depth and safety. In passing the city, we enjoyed a very distinct view of it and the adjacent country, which is covered with bold hills

and a fertile soil. The opposite shores of Calabria are extremely bold and romantic, productive of pasture, excellent olives, cattle, &c., and inhabited by a hardy race of inoffensive and industrious husbandmen.

Mount Etna was visible for a few minutes, in the distance, but it seemed to woo the rolling clouds, and was again overspread by their dense masses.

Early in the morning of the following day we passed Cape Passaro, and at half-past one, P.M., we descried the white shores of Malta when at twenty-five miles' distance; but as the wind gradually subsided to nearly a calm towards sunset, Captain Curtis, our commanding-officer, ordered sail to be shortened. On the 25th there was an oppressive sirocco; and at half-past eight, A.M., our ship was safely moored in the noble harbour of Valetta. The first lieutenant went immediately on shore in the ship's gig with the Marquis of Hastings's despatches. On his return, he brought us the welcome intelligence of our having got pratique,—a very cheering circumstance to all on board, particularly to the officers and crew, who had been nine weeks at sea, or at different ports, always in quarantine.

Several flights of steps lead from the quays to the city. The intervening inclined streets are lined with shops and stalls loaded with a great variety of eatables and wares. The itinerant merchants are indefatigable in their addresses to purchasers, who are of all nations, habited in various costumes, which give a gay, dazzling appearance, under an unclouded sky, to the moving crowd in the principal streets, squares, and markets.

In this singular isle of the Mediterranean, every animate or inanimate object indigenous to the soil possesses some peculiarity. The glare of the hard, naked roads—the protection of productive patches of earth with innumerable stone walls,—a want of rivers, hedge-rows, corn-fields,—the eastern air of the solid, flat-roofed houses, projecting glazed balconies,—all tended to raise my curiosity and surprise in no ordinary degree.

Although this island is destitute of rich landscape, it can boast of one of the steadiest and most salubrious climates in Europe. During the height of summer the heat is certainly oppressive; but the spacious buildings afford a

considerable protection against its influence, and they are much superior to those at Naples.

The island is free from swamps and malaria; and the surrounding atmosphere is uninfluenced by any unhealthy neighbouring continent, as at Corfù. The soil is found in scanty patches, of no great depth, on a soft, calcareous rock, and every inch of it is protected by walls, as before-mentioned, to prevent its being carried away by the heavy, periodical rains. To the south-west the land rises precipitously; and to the north-east it is flat. It is cultivated with great skill, and irrigated, during the parching heats of summer, from capacious tanks of rain-water. There is only one small stream in the island, which is conducted by an aqueduct eight miles long, to Valetta. The water is kept there as a reserve to supply the tanks when the rain fails.

The cotton tree is cultivated with success in different parts of the island. Superior fruits and vegetables are also grown in abundance. The oranges are particularly good, and so highly esteemed as to be in general request throughout Europe.

Malta is about fifty-three miles from the

southern extremity of Sicily, and the island is twenty-two miles in length, and twelve miles broad. It is filled with towns, villages, and country houses. The population of the Maltese islands, including Gozo and Cumino, amounts to about 96,000 souls, of which 15,000 belong to Gozo, separated by a strait four miles wide; and where so few resources exist, you may imagine there is much poverty and wretchedness, not unmixed with a great deal of vice. The existence of a strong garrison, several ships of war, and a dock-yard, is the means of a considerable circulation of money in the island; but its important consequences cannot be felt by all the members of this dense population. There is a vast deal of real misery among the lower classes, which is borne with uncommon patience. Their house rents are very trifling; and, as they are more abstemious in eating and drinking than either the Italians or Sicilians, the Maltese peasants contrive to exist under a system of great self-denial without a murmur.

Valetta, the capital * of this island, lies on

* Founded in 1566, by Lavalette, grand master of the knights of Malta.

the high ground of a peninsula, between two of the most convenient and safe harbours in the world. You will have no mean idea of the knights of Malta when you have seen the sumptuous palaces and magnificent churches of their erection. The stupendous fortifications, dock-yard, lazaretto, subterranean granaries and aqueduct, are the admiration and astonishment of all foreigners. The outward walls are of a prodigious height and thickness, scooped from the solid rock, with corresponding ditches, which extend for miles in different directions. The ports are defended by batteries, considered impregnable, and lined with substantial quays. The streets are extremely regular and clean, but as they are paved with a white free-stone, they are painful to the eyes—more particularly during summer, when a great deal of heat and light is reflected from the pavement.

Our worthy governor, the Marquis of Hastings, has lately arrived here, with his family, from the continent. They occupy a noble palace, which was that of the grand master in former days. Although I have been so lately at Rome, the magnificent interior of St. John's Church here has quite astonished me. Its rich

tapestry and curious mosaic pavement are very splendid. The monuments of the grand masters and knights of Malta, are composed of the most costly materials, and from the chisels of the first Italian sculptors.

The Maltese are of African origin, and a well-grown, hardy, robust race. They are industrious and frugal; but ignorant, superstitious, and revengeful. The women have a dark olive complexion, but their features are tolerably regular. Their large black eyes are full of expression; and in person they are inclined to the *enbonpoint.* The walking costume is extremely becoming. It consists of rich black silk; and as no bonnet is ever worn, a square piece of the same material is placed over the head and drawn over the arms in front of the bust.

The dress of the men among the lower class, consists of a jacket, trowsers, and a red sash round the waist. A thick worsted nightcap is worn in the hottest weather, and it never seems to cause any uneasiness. The Maltese make good steady seamen; they are also very expert in the management of boats, which are

handsome and numerous. Boat fares are very reasonable, and a boat can be procured at any hour during the day or night. The Maltese language is full of harsh sounds, a patois, compounded of Arabic, (which is the fundamental part,) German, Greek, Italian, and other languages. The upper classes speak Italian, and most of the natives understand English, more or less.

The Maltese mix a good deal in English society; they are intelligent, and very pleasing in their manners. Their amusements consist chiefly of music and dancing, and in the latter they excel.

There is a good Italian opera in Valetta, and the vocalists are brought over from Naples and Sicily. The house is open during the greater part of the year; and the prices of admission are extremely reasonable. It is well attended, and the boxes are generally hired for the season.

Malta has been free from that dreadful scourge, the plague, since 1813. On that occasion no less than 4486 persons fell victims to it during the eight months that the disease con-

tinued to rage in the island. The quarantine laws are now very strict; and it is to be hoped that the plague will never again make such a ravage among the interesting inhabitants of this happy spot.

ITALY AND SWITZERLAND.

THE FOLLOWING pages contain an account of my Second Journey, through Italy and Switzerland, commencing at Corfù, after an interval of two years, during which I was attached to the army in Malta and the Ionian Islands.

ITALY AND SWITZERLAND.

LETTER I.

Departure from Corfù.—The Adriatic.—Brindisi.—Illyrian Isles.—Trieste.—A Greek in distress.—Sirocco.—Arrival at Ancona.

In Quarantine, Ancona, 1st Oct. 1826.

Since I parted with you at Corfù, the roaring winds of the Adriatic have had but little mercy on our small trabaculo, and we were obliged to seek shelter by running into different ports during an extremely tedious passage, although we thought of having a very short and pleasant one when your boat left us at Vido*, on the 8th ultimo, with as fair and steady a breeze as could be desired.

We passed a disagreeable night on the 9th, when the wind veered against us, with heavy

* A fortified island opposite Corfù.

squalls, which gave our sailors sufficient employment, and excited the bile of the three helpless passengers in a woful degree. On the following morning the gulf reared its foamy billows in violent succession against the bows of the vessel; and as she was drifting very fast to leeward, our skipper altered his course and bore up to Brindisi, where there is, I understand, about fifty feet depth of water very near the town. This is the Brundusium of the ancient Romans, and was a sea-port of some celebrity during the empire. It was there that the legions were marshalled, and galleys collected to transport them to their conquests in Greece and the eastern nations. Being in quarantine, the authorities permitted us to land in the court of the Sanità only, where we had a peep of a part of the town, which is poor, dirty, and thinly inhabited. Not far from the water's edge an old column still stands, said to have been brought by Sylla from Egypt, and opposite to it is the base of another which time has not respected. I have seen no account of these remains, but they may have been a part of a triumphal arch raised there to commemorate some sanguinary conquest. A tolerably

good wine and some oil are made in this quarter, for exportation.

A fair breeze sprung up on the 13th, when we left Brindisi, but after running a hundred miles, we were visited alternately with calms and adverse winds. On passing the Gulf of Manfredonia the skipper laboured hard to keep his course, but heavy squalls forced him to seek shelter under the Isle of Agosta towards sunset on the 17th. This is one of a cluster of islands off the coast of Dalmatia, which appear to be in a state quite as rugged and barbarous as the primitive shores of Northern America.

In such a situation you may easily imagine there were no health officers to prevent our roaming at will, which proved a great relief. We scrambled to the summit of some of the wild banks of this sheltered haven by way of stretching our stiffened limbs, while the skipper went with two of the sailors to cut down a supply of wood to replenish our store, which was almost exhausted. It was nearly dark when we descended to the shore, where we found some of the natives making a large fire for the purpose of attracting fish, which they were prepared to catch during the night.

This bay is one of the prettiest seclusions possible, during a contrary wind, as it is completely landlocked. Its craggy shores are mantled with a wild luxuriance of trees, shrubs, and flowers, and it affords a safe and good anchorage. Before we returned to the vessel, we procured some newly caught fish, which were cooked for our supper on the fishermen's fire, round which we reposed. We made ourselves very merry, smoked, and drank grog in true sailor-like style, and did not return on board till past midnight.

Early in the morning the fishermen brought us a supply of bread, fresh meat, and grapes, from a neighbouring village, and we again sailed with a gentle slant of wind. Our skipper hugged the Dalmatian shores very closely, as affording a better shelter than the opposite coast during bad weather, and we sailed through the Illyrian islands from Agosta to Grossa, which presented an agreeable variety of rugged forms, diversified by the occasional appearance of small towns along their shores.

On the 19th, we bore down upon Italy, and soon descried the mountain of Ancona; and early in the morning of the 20th, we anchored

in its harbour, in twenty-four feet water, at a short distance from the Mole. The town has a charming appearance from the sea, and lies on the slope, and along the base of a hill, intermixed with gardens. I believe it can boast of possessing one of the finest lazarettos in the world. The Mole is very spacious, and at its extremity, over the sea, a handsome lighthouse on the revolving principle has been erected. As we found the papal government inexorable in its refusal to grant pratique, my fellow passengers went into the lazaretto, and I concluded with the skipper to accompany him to Trieste, where I hoped to gain my freedom by undergoing six days' purification in quarantine. After a tedious passage of four days, we anchored in Trieste harbour, and to our mortification were told that, by a recent regulation, no vessel from Corfù could be released from quarantine under twenty-eight days.

During this trip, I was anxious to obtain a good view of the amphitheatre at Pola, but the state of the weather completely prevented my having that gratification. This edifice was reared by Titus a short time after the fall of Jerusalem, and a great portion of its walls still

bears strong testimony to the substantiality of Roman masonry in ancient times. Eighteen centuries have rolled over its adamantine walls, which are in wonderful preservation, and likely to continue so for the gaze and admiration of ages yet unborn. Pola possesses a good harbour, and is well sheltered. It was fortified by the Venetians during the middle ages, and latterly, I believe, when in possession of the French troops under Marmont.

The town itself is a dirty, ruinous place, containing some 600 souls in a half-starved, vegetative condition. The surrounding country, as may be inferred, is like an unweeded garden, where the vine, the olive, and the myrtle grow as Nature fixed them under the fostering sky of this fine climate.

Neither the skipper nor I were in the best humour on finding the continued obstacles to our liberty. As the trabaculo was at the disposal of one of our engineer officers who was at Trieste, we landed at the Sanità to parley with him across the bars; when it was decided, after two days' detention, that we should return to Ancona. Before leaving Trieste, I may as well describe the health office, which was the only scene I

was permitted to see on terra firma. On my first landing, I was inspected by a surgeon, (a little, civil old man,) to ascertain whether I was free from disease. This ceremony over, I was allowed to enter a long room, among a crowd of unfortunates like myself, in durance vile. In this section of the building two parallel walls about four feet high are built, at a short distance from each other, to prevent contact.

The plague is the chief dread of those seas; and it being considered that the touch alone will convey the disease, while the atmosphere or the breath is innocuous, the crews and passengers of vessels in quarantine are permitted to converse across these walls with their agents and friends. Much business and various arrangements are accordingly managed, previous to pratique being granted. During my short visit, I was highly amused with the busy, crowded, and picturesque scene. Such a singular mixture of nations, languages, costume, and business, I have rarely witnessed in a space so confined; but the majority appeared to be Turks, Greeks, and German or Polish Jews. The guardiani were kept continually engaged in conveying samples of various articles across the

walls, attached to the end of a long pole, which underwent the accustomed purification on the healthy side of society previous to their being examined or handled. Immediately afterwards some dozens of voices, in almost as many languages, held forth in dialogues the most deafening, while different parties industriously made their various mercantile arrangements.

Towards the centre of the room there was a motley group of Greeks and Jews. Among the former was a tall young man whose limbs were strong and well turned, with an air at once commanding and martial. The Grecian garb sat well upon him, and it was of a rich description. Under his small skull-cap his glossy black ringlets hung in careless profusion over his shoulders; but he was evidently labouring under considerable distress, for he occasionally covered his fine manly countenance with both hands, to hide the silent tears which bedewed it. When he became somewhat composed, a transient smile lighted up his features, while he examined a pair of long pistols, mounted in silver and curiously carved, which were fixed in the girdle, under his embroidered jacket. Almost immediately afterwards a wily Jew accosted the

Greek, and requested his permission to examine the handsome arms, which had evidently tickled the cupidity of Moses. The latter, after ascertaining that the Greek was through recent losses in great distress, immediately offered to buy the handsome weapons. The Greek gave his consent, but as the Jew named a price greatly under their value, the young man instantly took them out of his hands; and, while in the act of replacing the arms in his girdle, a swarthy son of Neptune, who was watching the parties during the transaction, stepped up to the Greek and proffered ten times the amount. The Greek being thus tempted, drew the weapons from his girdle for the purpose of handing them to the new bidder, but he almost instantly advanced them towards his bosom. At the same moment the round, big tear rolled from his eye. After an inward struggle, the poor fellow at last consented to part with one of them, to enable him to meet his immediate wants; and he replaced the other in his belt. This was one of the many unfortunate exiles hunted out of their wretched country by the Turks, and so frequently to be met with in these seas during the sanguinary warfare which

has rendered the classic land of Greece a frightful desert.

On finding we had been unexpectedly tossed "out of the frying-pan into the fire," in endeavouring to get pratique at Trieste, it was arranged that we should return to Ancona; and, after settling some unexpected difficulty in clearing out our vessel, we went on board to prepare for sailing on the following morning. The rays of the setting sun illumined the Adriatic, which was smooth as a mirror, while it reflected the town, the shipping, and the neighbouring rugged cliffs and headlands in an enchanting manner; whilst the massy, white buildings of Trieste, the surrounding villas on the rocky steeps, and the hills covered with large timber of various kinds, were thrown into bold, broad masses of dazzling and brilliant hues. It was one of those fine natural pictures frequently witnessed along the shores of this singular gulf.

On the 28th, we departed from Trieste with a tolerable breeze; and, by keeping near the Istrian shore, we had an opportunity of seeing Capo d'Istria, Pirano, and Rovigno. Part of the following day I was quite paralyzed by an

overpowering sirocco. You cannot imagine any thing more enervating than this gloomy aërial visitor, which as instantaneously unhinges the whole man on its commencing to blow, as a change of wind exhilarates the system after the sirocco has ceased. Early on the 30th, the hill of Ancona was visible, but the sea was sadly convulsed. A lull, and then a perfect calm succeeded, as we entered the harbour, which we reached, by means of towing, at sunset.

LETTER II.

Ancona.—The Mole.—Trajan's Arch.—Harbour.—Females.—Churches.—Lazaretto.—Quarantine.—Loretto.—Scenery.—Santissima Casa.—Description of the Establishment.

ANCONA, 8th Oct., 1826.

I HAVE now been here eight days, which have glided away very agreeably in examining the lazaretto and the churches, and in various excursions to Loretto and the neighbourhood.

Ancona is under the dominion of the Pope, and well situated for trading with the Adriatic and the Levant. From its important position, Ancona has been a place of contention between belligerents. The fortifications were once strong, but have been much injured during the last war. The citadel, however, is still in good order, and would prove a formidable point d'appui. This is a free port, with a convenient harbour. The Mole may be styled a work of

unusual magnitude for so comparatively small a place, being 2,000 feet in length, 100 feet broad, and 65 feet above the surface of the sea. The harbour was enlarged and beautified at the expense of Trajan, consequently the grateful inhabitants raised a splendid arch to the emperor, in commemoration of so useful an act. This fine relic of antiquity stands between the Mole and the town, and is composed of a blueish Parian marble, which is in excellent preservation. It is stripped of its brass ornaments; and the horse with his rider, which adorned the summit, was blown into the sea. One of the feet of the horse, which is the only existing fragment, is now to be seen in the principal room of the Palazzo Commune.

Too many monuments, perhaps, have been erected during the empire, to gratify personal vanity. A little of the useful might have been sometimes added; and if an asylum for distressed seamen had been reared instead of Trajan's Arch, such a work would have appropriately crowned the improved condition of the harbour. A more modern arch has been erected, not far from Trajan's; but not to an emperor. It is to Benedict XIV., who felt the

growing importance of Ancona as a sea-port, which he improved by several wise regulations, and enlarged the Mole.

Although churchmen appear to be the last order that should govern a country, the history of the Roman Catholic prelacy offers a few striking instances of able, beneficent, and liberal-minded pontiffs,—fathers of their people in the noblest sense, and true patriots. Such a man was Clement XII., who made Ancona a free port, and built the lazaretto.

During my stay, I devoted the mornings and evenings to walking on the spacious Mole, to inhale the sea-breeze and watch the movements of the few vessels entering and leaving the port; and the stout fishing-boats, steering outwards in regular little fleets of from a dozen to three times the number, or returning, freighted with various kinds of excellent fish, with which the Adriatic teems.

It was afterwards an amusing scene to pace along the wharfs, to listen to the strains of the tiny mandoline, or the deeper tones of the guitar, joined to the patriotic song of some poor Greek, or the more refined Italian ditty; while a medley group were sometimes seen collected

in a Greek mistico, or an Italian feluca, dancing, whirling, and stamping, to the music of some half dozen voices, or the tinkling of the Spanish guitar. Thus the laborious, weather-beaten sons of the sunny Mediterranean are accustomed to solace themselves after the toils of the day. On a calm, moonlight night, when the crews are spread over the decks of their vessels, swallowing their frugal supper of fish, soup, or macaroni, quaffing some light wine, and smoking, it is very pleasing to throw one's self into a boat, and sail up and down an Italian seaport, where the vessels of various nations are at anchor,—in order to witness the silvery, quiet effect of the whole scene, and to compare it in imagination to the wild, turbulent wave, on which one-half of these same vessels may be tossed to-morrow. But what does the true sailor care for roaring winds or overwhelming billows? They serve but to attach him the more to his own dangerous element, and to alienate his mind from what he terms the lubberly occupations of landsmen.

Many of the houses are spacious and elegant, but the streets are irregular, and some of them are kept in a miserably dirty condition.

The purity of the air makes some amends for the uncleanliness of the lazy natives; and Italy cannot boast of a more temperate and salubrious climate. The Anconese appear to be remarkably healthy; and the females are well-shaped, and sometimes comely, although I looked in vain for that beauty which some travellers have represented as prevalent here.

The churches are not devoid of interest, and some few contain pictures worthy of being seen. The cathedral stands on a bold promontory, and is a singular-looking building. Its curious porch is supported by two lions of Egyptian granite. The principal altar is extremely ancient, and contains some fine yellow marble pillars. On its left is a picture of the Virgin, attributed to Perugino. In the churches of St. Dominic, St. Stefano, St. Pelagio, and the Jesuits, there are some specimens of Guercino, Leli, and Conchi. In St. Pelagio there is an interesting painting of a female kneeling to an angel, said to be one of Guercino's earliest productions.

The principal market is spacious, and presents an animated scene on market-days, when the sun-burnt peasants, in their lively costumes, come together from the surrounding

farms and villages. I was much struck with the appearance of the Jews' market, which is held in a narrow street, where an abundance of the best provisions are exposed for sale. From such a profusion, I judge that the dispersed tribes of Israel must be here congregated in considerable numbers, and that they are no bad judges of dainty viands.

The town is remarkably well-furnished with all kinds of provisions and luxuries; and as the scarcest commodity is money, Ancona is a cheap residence, and in many other respects is extremely desirable. A new theatre is in a forward state, intended for the Italian Opera. It is really a beautiful design; but I should be inclined to think that it will prove much too spacious for the place. Under the same roof is a suite of rooms, tastefully decorated for concerts and dancing.

No person coming here should neglect to visit the commodious, extensive lazaretto. This advice is of course not intended for those travellers who may be landed from vessels from Turkish or Greek ports, and some of our own dependencies; as they sometimes will have a

chance of gazing on its ponderous walls longer than is either convenient or desirable. That frightful disease, the Plague, has long since roused the attention of the European governments to guard against its introduction by every possible means; and thus the quarantine regulations have been established, which are enforced with a rigour that must strike every body on whom they are practised for the first time, rather forcibly.

At Malta, the Health-office is admirably managed. The hand of Nature has there bestowed a capacious harbour for vessels of every size; and rocky isles, on which houses have been built for lodging persons brought there from infected or suspected ports; and ventilated store-rooms for the purification of cargoes.

I would place the Lazaretto of Ancona next to that of Malta, so far as I have seen. It lies on an island, with which there is a communication from the town through a grand gateway, and over a bridge. Another entrance to the lazaretto is from the sea, by a spacious portal pierced through a high, strong wall round the

establishment; and by this I gained admission to the court-yard, which is surrounded with buildings forming a pentagon.

The rooms allotted for those persons in quarantine are plainly furnished and comfortable. Covered galleries are open, to admit of exercise, which command views of part of the town.

Every respectable individual in quarantine is attended by a guardiano, who acts as valet, bed-maker, and cook; and he is entitled to three francs a-day, with board. The spenditore acts as restorateur, and supplies the meals on moderate terms. With the assistance of a book, *per passare il tempo*, this temporary imprisonment may be endured.

The town of Loretto lies twelve miles from Ancona, on a hill about three miles from the sea. The road thither winds through gentle hills covered with cultivated tracts and gardens. From the ramparts of Loretto the country is seen to advantage. To the east the Adriatic appears bathing the shore; and craggy hills, overspread with trees, and two rivers running through the valley, close round Loretto on the opposite side. On the summit of some of these hills, towns or villages are situated, which

give a romantic air to the scenery. The Italians, no doubt, find their account in placing themselves so far above valleys liable to be rendered unhealthy by noxious exhalations during the hot months.

Every one has heard of the story of the Santissima Casa di Nazarette, which was built at Loretto by the pontifical government, but which most devotees believe to have been brought over by angels from Palestine in the year 1294. In due time, its wondrous preservation from infidel violence, and its subsequent transportation through the air, gained a host of believers. Pilgrims hastened to the most holy altar of the Blessed Virgin Mother to offer up their adorations and crave her protection. The church which covers the Santissima Casa was designed by Bramante, and under its dome the sacred building is placed. The holy image of the Virgin, made, as it is believed, of dark cedar of Lebanon, and carved by St. Luke, reigns there amidst the continual glare and smoke of lamps and candles, held by figures of angels; and, before Napoleon paid her a visit, she could boast of as rich petticoats and as great a variety of precious jewels as any princess in Europe.

The French carried the image to Paris, but finding it had no charms for the religieux of the capital, it was restored in 1802. When I entered the sanctuary it was quite crowded with women, men, and children, all in a kneeling posture.

The outside casing of this sanctuary is a rich design in the Corinthian order, of white marble, closed in by bronze gates of elaborate workmanship. In another part of the church is a spacious vaulted room, fitted up with glazed cases and drawers for the treasures of the establishment, or li doni dei Fedeli alla Santa Madre. Part of the ceiling was painted by Titian. The cases are but partially filled with precious donations, in consequence, it is said, of the abstractions of the French army.

I shall enumerate some of the striking objects which are now displayed in this establishment, deserving the inspection of the virtuoso. The first object that arrested my attention was a beautiful small figure of Christ on the Cross, carved in solid gold—the cross being of agate. Near this crucifix is a large pearl, in which are distinctly traced the Virgin and Child. To this relic there is appended a story of a fisherman

in the east, who having prayed to the Madonna to fill his net, was amply rewarded by examining the haul and finding the pearl, which he afterwards presented to the Santissima Casa. The pearl, it seems, was taken away at the French invasion, but restored by Louis XVIII. There are three carved chalices of gold. The most costly is inlaid with two rows of diamonds and rubies, and it was presented by Murat. The remaining two were given to the church by his queen, and one of Napoleon's brothers.

The Queen of Sardinia has lately been on a visit to Loretto, in consequence of the delicate state of her majesty's health. The royal pilgrimage has not been in vain, as her majesty's disorder has been removed in consequence of the faith she placed in the Virgin in her own veritable mansion! Valuable gifts to the treasury were the result of the royal visit. They consist of a diamond cross, and ring, and two necklaces of pearls and amethysts.

In the entrance chamber there is a picture attributed to Guido, the subject of which is a Matron surrounded by blooming Virgins employed at their needles.

The establishment of the Santissima Casa is extensive, and supports a bishop, canons, and chaplains. If those holy fathers hold their flocks in religious thraldom, they blend their severity with acts of charity and kindness, as the necessitous are supplied with drugs and medical advice, and the wandering beggars are often lodged and nourished at the expense of the church.

Next to the church there is a long building containing accommodation for the members of the establishment, a hospital, laboratory, brew-house, and cellars.

To all these there is access, and the servants who conduct strangers through them are civil and communicative.

There is a display of gallipots on the shelves of the dispensary which is worthy of notice, as they are said to have been ornamented from the designs of Raphael and Julio Romano; although I could see nothing particularly striking about them.

In the brewhouse there was a busy scene. Women and men were engaged in wine making, which is a curious process, and in some respects, a dirty operation. A number of persons

were employed in its earlier stages, and the sight was enough to spoil my relish for the juice of the grape for some days. The tramplers were knee deep in square troughs treading the grapes. In another place the process of fermentation was going forward. The last operation consists in placing the wine in clean, well seasoned casks, when the liquor gradually acquires its proper character and becomes fit for use.

The butt of the Madonna is so capacious, that I dare say it may hold the contents of six of our pipes; and it stands preeminently conspicuous among the hogsheads and barrels.

In the square there is a statue of Pope Pius VI. and a fountain of bronze. There are shops in several streets and stalls for the sale of votive offerings, rosaries, madonnas, crucifixes, missals, breviaries, coloured prints of miracles, mysteries, and martyrdoms. These strange articles may be termed the staple commodities of Loretto, and they meet with as ready sale as corn does at Mark Lane.

In the course of a ramble through the town, I witnessed groups of peasants and pilgrims from various districts, assembled, for different

periods, to seek consolation at the shrine of the cedar Virgin. A number of these devotees consider it a matter of conscience to purchase a rosary, madonna, or some other commodity warranted as consecrated by the Pope, from one of the licensed venders of church toys. The Loretto girls are rather handsome, although the man's hat which they generally wear does not become the softer sex.

LETTER III.

Departure from Ancona.—Pesaro.—Catolico.—Priests.—Rimini.—Cesena.—Rubicon.—Forli.—Faënza.—Imola.—Country.—Arrival at Bologna.

Bologna, 13th Oct., 1826.

On the afternoon of the 9th I left Ancona for Senegaglia, distant twenty miles, which was reached after a pleasant drive, passing the river Fumigino over an old bridge, and through the Falconera,—a tolerable wine district.

The following morning, after leaving Senegaglia, the first place worth any notice was Fano, prettily situated on the sea.

At 12 o'clock we halted at Pesaro, after leaving Urbino (the birth-place of Raphael) to the left. The principal street is lined with handsome houses. In the Piazza St. Augustino there is a bronze fountain, consisting of colossal figures of men and horses. Whether they are intended to represent Neptune and his attend-

ants, the spectator is left to conjecture. At all events they are sea-sick, as both the men and animals are vomiting water with all their might; and from the capacious basin thus filled the inhabitants supply their pitchers.

There are some old churches worthy of being visited. The Duomo is a plain edifice, and in the churches of San Augustino and San Giovanni there is nothing remarkable; but in Erenzo, the protecting saint's church, more money has been expended, and its principal altar is rendered attractive by verde antico and valuable marbles. The late Queen Caroline, when Princess of Wales, resided sometimes at Pesaro, in an extensive palace purchased by her, and afterwards given to Bergami. About two miles from this place, her royal highness, I was told, also bought a country retreat, surrounded with parks, a shrubbery, and gardens, laid out on an English plan, of which Bergami is likewise proprietor.

Pesaro is distinguished by the circumstance of its being the birth-place of Rossini,—a composer who, in many respects, may contest the palm of dramatic merit with Mozart himself. His parents were a horn-player and a second-

rate, but very beautiful, actress and singer, who supported themselves by strolling about and performing in the theatrical companies at the different towns in the north of Italy. It is a pleasing trait in the character of this young and thoughtless man of genius, that, from the beginning of his brilliant career, he contributed liberally to the comforts of his father and mother. He was born in 1792, and is now, therefore, only four and thirty; so that, considering what he has already achieved, the musical world may reasonably expect great results from his future efforts *.

In proceeding on our way, and towards sunset, there came on a storm of rain, which obliged us to take shelter for the night at Catolico, where supper and beds were provided at a post-house kept by a former cameriere of the late Royal Wanderer.

While the supper was getting ready, I went

* This was written nine years ago; but the expectations then entertained have been disappointed. Rossini became rich, and appears to have "supped full" of fame. The consequence is, that his love of ease and pleasure has gained a complete ascendancy over him; and, though alive in the body, he is dead to his art.

into the drinking parlour, where two priests were edifying a few needy, devout listeners with religious lore. The elder priest, seeing I was a foreign traveller, began to shew symptoms of a wish to get into conversation with me, by advancing with a most gracious smile. After some desultory remarks on the changeable weather, and the strength of England, (a universal theme amongst the priests,) he complained of his poverty, and expressed a wish to raise a small sum on a cameo ring which he took from his finger. I told him that I was no collector of antiques, but at the same time I should feel glad to make a purchase of the ring at a moderate price. After a consultation with those assembled, the old priest said he would let it go for four dollars, which I gave him without hesitation, and the money seemed to give him infinite satisfaction.

I was roused from my slumbers at 4 o'clock in the morning of the 11th, by the landlord of the inn, who was very eloquent on the comforts he could afford, if I chose to remain till the following day. The rain was falling in torrents; but as I was anxious to reach Bologna, I proceeded onwards.

A few hours brought us to Rimini, which we entered through the ruined Arch of Augustus. This is an interesting remain of Roman greatness, consisting of a single arched gate of stone, flanked by two Corinthian columns, and bold heads of men in alto relievo. Time's grey front is conspicuous on it, and the top is covered by a clumsy addition of modern date, which detracts from the beauty of the design, although it shields the ancient masonry from the weather.

Rimini bears all the marks of a town of former splendour, and of a wealthier and more refined people than the present inhabitants.

After Julius Cæsar passed the Rubicon, he is supposed to have harangued the troops and the multitude that surrounded him, at Rimini. In the Piazzo Mercato there is a suggestum, (or rather pedestal,) on which Cæsar is said to have stood to harangue his army; but the conjecture is more curious than credible. The pedestal now serves the ignoble but useful purpose of a resting-place for burdens brought to market by the peasants.

In the Piazza Grande there is a bronze statue of Paul V., and a simple fountain of

marble. The main street is full of fine houses, and most of the shops appear to be too good for the slender stock of wares with which they are furnished.

I was well repaid for my visit to the church of San Francesco. The ancient church was of the style of pointed architecture, although this has been nearly obliterated by subsequent alterations. The present front of the church was designed by Alberti in 1450. It is composed of four columns of an order between the Ionic and Doric, and three arches, of which the centre is the largest, and forms the entrance. Above the columns is a handsome entablature of red and green marble; and the whole has a curious but an agreeable effect. One side of the church only is exposed to view, in which there are seven arches raised on insulated piers. Over each pier there is a circle of porphyry, entwined by a wreath; and a sarcophagus is placed under every arch. The original interior plan is greatly deteriorated; and the piers are encumbered with architraves and Corinthian pilasters arranged in stories.

The burying-place of the Malatesta family is in this church. Its walls are covered with

singular bassi relievi and ornaments. Pandolfo Malatesta is represented in bas relief drawn in a triumphal car by slaves on his way to Rome, surrounded by the various members of his government. In another, the fine arts, and what is more extraordinary, the heathen gods, are seen mixed up with the symbols of the Church. There is also a vault for the remains of philosophers, statesmen, and poets. Two altars are adorned with the statues of children, and double columns of precious marble resting on the backs of elephants.

The Malatestas were brave condottieri and signors of Rimini, and they were possessed of some taste for literature and the fine arts; as may be discovered among the palaces and churches of Rimini, erected by them during short intervals of peace. Dante has immortalized the name of Paulo Malatesta by his episode of the loves of Francesca da Rimini and Paulo.

Returning to the hotel, I saw the notorious Bergami driving in a mean single horse chaise. In the evening I went to the theatre, where I witnessed a play founded on the history of Prince Charles the Pretender,—followed by an amusing farce, La Contesa dei Villani. I had

a comfortable seat in the pit for the trifling sum of seven baiocci, or three pence halfpenny.

I felt a strong desire to visit Ravenna, the former seat of Gothic conquerors, and the chosen residence of Theodoric the Great, during a wise and splendid reign of thirty years; but the lateness of the season, the badness of the roads, and my anxiety to reach Venice, argued loudly against such an indulgence and deviation from the regular route.

Ravenna was for some time Lord Byron's favourite residence. Its deserted palaces and magnificent architecture, together with the severe gloominess of its seclusion, afforded admirable opportunities to the noble bard for meditation, and the composition of part of his finest works.

After leaving Rimini, there is a charmingly wooded hill on the left, where San Marino stands embowered among dark trees. It was founded by a Dalmatian hermit, and has been long the capital of a petty republic, by sufferance of the former rulers of this country. The independence of the republic has been continued by the Papal Government, and it was even respected by Napoleon, when master of Italy.

Addison observes, "Nothing can be a greater instance of the natural love of mankind for liberty, and of their aversion to arbitrary government, than such a savage mountain covered with people, while the Campagna of Rome is almost destitute of inhabitants." How could the latter be otherwise, unless people wanted to be sent out of the world before their time by its noxious vapours?

The small town of Cesena, situated at the bottom of a hill, has an air of agreeable repose. It is surrounded with some good vineyards, and a quantity of hemp is raised in the neighbourhood. The stream of the Pisatello is two miles from Cesena, and supposed by many learned men to be the Rubicon. The Rubicon was no doubt one of the small streams which run into the Adriatic, between Forli and Rimini, although it is a moot point which of them it actually was.

On the 12th the vetturino halted at Forli. We had previously crossed the river Ronca over a crazy wooden bridge, near the remains of an ancient brick one. Forli is a handsome town, though many of the houses are built in a style and size little suited to the present

poverty of the place. The principal street contains some palaces; and at one end of it the houses are built over spacious arcades.

The Grand Square is striking. On one side of it the palace of the Prefecture, of a modern date, is erected. Its front is reared on arcades, which has a fine effect; and otherwise it is a handsome building. Immediately opposite is a church with a spire; and in the centre of the square, a plain pillar, surmounted by a statue of the Virgin and Child. The whole space is levelled, and forms a good promenade.

The women of this part of Italy are agreeable and good-looking. Those of the middle classes wear black veils thrown over the hair and shoulders; and the inferior orders have large white handkerchiefs of open work, with Vandyck edges,—both of which articles of dress are becoming.

The northern Italians are fond of the game of pallone; and there is a large building in this town for indulging in their favourite amusement. The pallone is a large leather ball filled with air, which is played with under cover, as in the Fives-court. The game is played by twelve persons, divided in sides of

six each, and they wear a wooden guard on the right arm for striking the pallone.

After leaving Forli, the road is flat and monotonous. Faënza is a pretty small town, and its ancient fountain is a curious relic, worthy of examination.

Before reaching Imola, we crossed a small stream, over which is a handsome red stone bridge, ornamented with figures placed upon the parapets.

Imola contains some good houses, but is a dirty place. It is a town of great antiquity, but every thing about it looks poverty-struck. The barbers make a show in this quarter with their brass and pewter basins, placed on gilt pillars in front of their shops. I witnessed a curious scene at one of them, where a young woman was shaving a country bumpkin in a most expert style, whilst an old grey-headed dame employed herself in giving an edge to some wretched razors.

The cathedral is spacious, and its principal altar, which is raised on steps, is handsome; and underneath the latter a small chapel is constructed.

The road between Imola and Bologna pre-

sents an agreeable improvement in cultivation and scenery. About midway some pretty country-seats are seen at intervals, which belong to the Bolognese nobility and richer classes. The farm-houses in this part of the country have a superior appearance, and a greater air of comfort than those we saw yesterday.

There is a long, monotonous vista through which we passed before entering the city;—and for many miles previous to our seeing any part of the town, the two clumsy, leaning, brick towers of Asinelli and Garisendi were visible. The horses of our vettura being very old, and one of the wretched animals having the misfortune to be lame and blind, the journey was tedious and disagreeable.

I feel great satisfaction in visiting Bologna for the second time, as I shall now be able to spend some days here, and see all the churches, the most remarkable palaces, and the Pinacoteca,—anglicè, public gallery of paintings.

LETTER IV.

Bologna.— University.—Instituto.—Architecture.—Environs.—Covered Gallery.— Churches.— Pictures.— Cemetery.—Theatres.—Casino.—Bolognese.

BOLOGNA, 16th October, 1826.

IT is now four days since my arrival at Bologna, and my time has been fully occupied in seeing the numerous places of interest in and around the city.

Feeling anxious to communicate what I have been doing since my last letter, I shall now give you some account of the interesting objects which came under my observation during my daily rambles.

On the first day I wandered through the city to gaze at the public buildings, churches, markets, and shops.

The history of Bologna is exceedingly interesting. It suffered greatly during the sanguinary revolutions of the empire, in conse-

quence, probably, of its central position and standing in a naturally rich valley, (la Grassa,) well watered, and capable of affording all the supplies required by an army.

After surviving the desperate conflicts of the barbarous ages, and the civil wars against their own petty tyrants, the citizens voluntarily placed themselves under the Papal government in 1278. They acknowledged the head of the church as their protector, whilst they prudently reserved to themselves the election of their own magistrates, the administration of the laws, and management of their finances. The Pope's protection, as liege lord, guarded them against ambitious intriguers at home, and restrained the projects of warlike neighbours. Confidence being thus established, industry was encouraged and commercial regulations were made with different countries. Soon afterwards a fresh impetus was given to the arts and sciences, which produced those great and learned individuals who gave a character and tone to Bolognese society.

When the French conquered Italy, under Napoleon, Bologna was annexed to the misnamed Italian Republic. The dark clouds of

that bloody period have again been succeeded by the sunshine of comparative freedom and independence, which the enlightened Bolognese it is to be hoped may long enjoy, as they deserve.

The university of Bologna was celebrated in former days, and during its most popular and flourishing period several thousand students were annually educated. Some four or five hundred only are now scattered over its capacious halls *.

* During the eleventh century, amidst broils and civil wars, the schools of Bologna were filled with students. The streets were crowded with armed men mingled with the gowned scholars of the university. But, unlike the modern French and German students, we do not find that the followers of Esculapius or Puffendorff, in those remote days, became converts to the sword.

Italian literature owes much to the early example of the schools of Bologna, and they have contributed their quota to the learned names that adorn its annals. Bologna has been remarkable for its learned females. In the fourteenth century, Novella d'Andrea assisted her father occasionally by delivering lectures on jurisprudence. Laura Bassi gave lectures upon the mathematics a few years before Mrs. Piozzi visited Italy. More recently, other females have been professors of anatomy and Greek.

In the beginning of the last century a laudable attempt was made to revive the art of painting, by the establishment of the Clementine Academy on the plan of the Caracci. This is styled the fourth and final epoch of the Bolognese school. It certainly has produced a few good artists, among whom Carlo Cignani, its first president, may be honourably named. The genius which animated the master spirits of the preceding century was, however, extinct, and there are no symptoms of any latent spark being rekindled.

Suitable apartments have been fitted up for this academy in a wing of the Palazzo Cellesi. Every encouragement is given to students who intend to follow the arts. Drawings, models, and pictures are provided for their use, whilst proper masters are appointed to direct the various classes into which the school is divided. Every expense for the proper support of the academy is defrayed by government.

The Instituto di Bologna, which has long enjoyed a high reputation, originated with Eustachio Manfredi, in the seventeenth century. This extraordinary youth was but sixteen years of age when he became founder of

the Academy of Sciences, afterwards included in the Instituto. Bologna owes the present noble establishment to General Count Marsigli, who retired from the imperial service in 1712, and devoted his time to the promotion of the arts and sciences. The whole of his valuable books, specimens of natural history, &c., were presented to the senate. In order to lodge the professors, who were now permanently employed, the public library, and the count's valuable donation, the city purchased the Palazzo Cellesi in 1714. The establishment has been since indebted to several benefactors, particularly to Pope Benedict XIV., who gave 15,000 volumes to the library of his native city.

The library consists of 150,000 printed volumes and manuscripts, including those of the naturalist Aldrovandus, and is open to the public. In other halls and apartments of the institution are to be seen a cabinet of natural history, a chemical laboratory, an observatory furnished with astronomical apparatus, a gallery of statues and pictures, a theatre of anatomy, &c. Excellent lectures are delivered gratuitously on the various arts and sciences by

competent professors, at stated periods. Travellers are admitted without the least difficulty to this interesting establishment; and no one should omit visiting it.

A great deal cannot be said in favour of the style of the architecture of many of the public buildings and churches of this city. The palaces are too often remarkable for little more than their great size; some few are extremely ancient, and were formerly adorned by the masterpieces in fresco, and many of the best pictures of the Italian masters. I find there is enough left for some days' examination, and I hope to be able to see a few of the finest specimens of that great triumvirate of the sixteenth century, the Caracci, and some of the triumphs of their distinguished scholars Domenichino, Guido, and Albano, which, to the honour of the Bolognese, they still possess.

The houses of this city are built chiefly of brick, with deep projecting roofs; but as their fronts are covered with stucco, delicately painted, they look clean and airy. Most of the streets are narrow, in consequence of piazzas and arcades being erected on the sides for pedestrians. The city is walled, and its circum-

ference is about four miles, but a great deal of the ground is taken up by the citizens' gardens, particularly towards the west, where they enjoy the "rus in urbe". The neighbouring country to the south and west is well cultivated. The scenery is enlivened by undulating hills covered with villas and gardens to the very base of the Appennines. Those scenes were frequently visited by the Caracci and their scholars, and furnished the back grounds of many celebrated religious and historical pictures.

On the morning of the 17th I visited the church of the Madonna di San Luca. It stands on a beautiful eminence three miles from the city, and was built after the design of Carlo Francesco Dotti. The interior of the church is in the shape of a Greek cross, of the Corinthian order, and crowned by a cupola. In front there is a handsome portico, from which there is a charming view of a rich and picturesque country.

The Bolognese have a passion for covered walks; and the money of many thousand devotees has been expended in building a covered gallery from the gates of Bologna to the above

church. Such a promenade may be very pleasant and convenient as a protection from the hot summer sun, or rainy weather,—but otherwise, how monotonous and disagreeable to shut out entirely on one side, from the pedestrian's view, the natural beauties of the romantic thickets through which the gallery runs.

On my arrival at the church, I found some good Catholics and pilgrims inquiring after the portrait of the Virgin, which is reputed to be painted by Saint Luke. The painting is locked up in a rich case, but is so encumbered with jewels and fillagree as to be hardly visible. At a grand annual festival the portrait is displayed in church-procession with solemn pomp.

On returning to the city I diverged a little towards the left to visit the Cimitero Comunale, which covers the grounds of a suppressed convent. In this burial-place there are various divisions for the ashes of different classes, surrounded by high walls. The bodies of the superior and opulent classes are laid in vaults under handsome arcades, which branch off from a central gate; and over these vaults there are sculptured monuments and frescos, some of which are finely executed. Underneath are also de-

positories, in which skulls are ranged, with the names of the individuals written on them. In front of the arcades the bodies of the lowly and vulgar are buried under the green sod. The males are separated from females, and the adults from children, in different plots, circumscribed with the dark cypress and hedges of myrtle. The church and dwelling for the Catholic priests of the establishment, are on one side of the cemetery, and a gloomy silence reigns over the whole. On my return to the city I went to the church of the Dominicans, where high mass was performed. I stood by the simple tablet over Guido's remains, which is a striking contrast to the splendid monument and sarcophagus of marble and ivory nearly opposite, raised to the founder of the church. Over the latter is placed the fresco of Il Paradiso, by Guido. The composition consists of our Saviour and the Virgin receiving St. Dominic into Heaven, with a group of angels underneath playing on musical instruments. Nothing can be more graceful and natural than the attitudes of the smiling cherubs playing on the guitar and bass. Whilst I listened to the fine voices and swelling peals of the organ, and kept my eyes on this fresco, so re-

plete with animation, I could imagine for the moment that Guido's angels joined their voices to those of the choir. The exterior of this church is in a rough, unfinished state. In the square fronting it there are two pillars, surmounted with figures of the Madonna and San Domenico.

The cathedral is a handsome structure, with a finished exterior, and was erected in 1600. Ludovico Caracci adorned its walls with his pencil. On the principal altar there is his fresco of our Saviour delivering the keys of Paradise to St. Peter. The composition is remarkably simple, and the chiaro scuro very skilfully managed; but it appeared to me to be deficiently lighted. In the sanctuary is Ludovico's last work, being the Annunciation, a favourite subject with all the great Italian masters.

This day I dined with Count Montanari and his cousin; and as the Opera opened for the first time this season, we adjourned there early in the evening.

The Opera-house (Teatro del Comune) will hold 2000 persons. It has four tiers of arched boxes, with balustrades in front, with slips over-head

for the lower classes. The pit is commodious, and its seats are numbered.

Meyerbeer's Il Crociato was performed there for the first time in this city; but as it was the composition of a German, I expected to witness some opposition. Its intrinsic merits, however, carried away the audience, and riveted their attention throughout. The scenery was indifferent, and would not be tolerated in London, yet the scene-painter was applauded, and called for, to make his bow, more than once. This was absurd enough, as the poor man did not seem to know whether to take it as a compliment or a joke.

The vocalists were second-rate, but the orchestra was excellent. The ballet was founded on a story from Roman history; and the principal female dancers were handsome, graceful creatures. The pantomime, dancing, combats, and Bacchanalian processions, were skilfully managed, and the various costumes very characteristic and costly.

The theatre for dramatic performances is on the Corso. It is a simple and elegant house; and I was struck with the imitation of various

bas-relief ornaments on its walls, which are admirably composed and painted. I was well entertained there lately with the piece of Death and the Doctor, followed by one of Goldoni's farces. At the conclusion of the performances I visited the Casino at the Palazzo Lambertini, where I was introduced by Count Montanari.

At this Casino there are rooms for reading, conversazioni, concerts, and dancing. Such an establishment must be some resource for respectable strangers resident at Bologna, who are allowed to be introduced by subscribers. I understand the soirées and other entertainments given at the Casino during winter, are conducted in the best style, and great attention is shewn to any foreign visitors.

LETTER V.

The Caracci and their Pupils.—Pinacoteca.—Collection of Pictures.—Palaces.—Frescos.—English Travellers in a flurry.

BOLOGNA, 18th Oct., 1826.

MY whole time has been lately devoted to making a round of the picture galleries and palaces. Those who feel any particular interest in pictures, are aware of the merited celebrity of the school of the Caracci, founded at Bologna towards the end of the sixteenth century. It was styled the Eclectic, and had for its plan a careful selection of all that was excellent in the various styles of the great painters, and the blending of those in one harmonious whole. Its founder, Ludovico, in conjunction with his cousins, Agostino and Annibale, superintended this academy with a truly *con amore* ardour and spirit. They furnished the school with their own original works and fine copies

of the first Italian masters, besides a selection of casts from the antique and drawings; whilst lectures were delivered by them on the principles of design, painting, and the living model. The Italians, when talking of those three painters, attribute greatness of conception to Ludovico, magnificence to Annibale, and invention to Agostino. Their own age was deeply indebted to them for rescuing painting from the feeble hands of indifferent teachers, and drawing forth the latent genius of a Domenichino, a Guido, and a Guercino. Posterity too, has been left a precious legacy in all these transcendant specimens of the Bolognese school which are still in such fine preservation.

Bologna, as you may suppose, is still rich in the fresco works and oil pictures of the Caracci and their scholars.

I have paid a long visit to the public gallery styled Pinacoteca, where there is multum in parvo that is well worthy of the study and admiration of the painter and connoisseur. Some of its best pictures have been brought from churches, suppressed convents, and palaces, for which they were originally painted.

This gallery contains the celebrated Rosario

(the Rosary Virgin) of Domenichino. In this picture a naked old man is seen stretched on the fore-ground. Immediately behind him a fierce soldier points a dagger at the breast of a lovely young female. In the opposite corner a pope is on his knees, offering up a prayer; and in the rear a warrior on horseback gallops towards two female saints terrified and locked in each other's arms. A mountainous district fills the distance. The upper part discloses the Virgin seated among the clouds, with her heavenly infant, strewing flowers over the groups on earth, and thus staying the murderous hands of the two soldiers. St. Gregory is introduced, interceding with the Virgin for the faithful. On the left, angels are seen displaying the various emblems of the Passion. The subject is singular enough; although the painter has skilfully combined two pictures on the same canvass; and contrasted in a felicitous manner the composure of the celestial, with the cruelty, fear, and anxiety of the terrestrial beings.

In this composition the figures are as large as life; and they are full of sentiment and expression. The colouring of some parts of the

picture is clear and beautiful, but it has been sadly deteriorated in consequence of the dampness of the church where it originally was, and of restorers.

The martyrdom of St. Agnes, by the same artist, is a picture about the size of the last. Here a murder is perpetrated, for the executioner has seized the saint by the hair and plunged a dagger in her breast. The numerous spectators appear dismayed at the spectacle. Heaven is displayed in the upper portion of the picture, with a representation of the Trinity. Angels are seen playing on different musical instruments, whilst an angel is about to be despatched to waft the soul of the saint to heaven.

The groups and accessories are admirable,—particularly the females, whose agonized feelings are portrayed with the utmost truth.

Raphael's celebrated St. Cecilia is a happy specimen of grace and colouring. The expression of the saint is indeed divine.

Guido's Murder of the Innocents, a carefully finished picture, is a heart-rending subject, finely composed, and full of the delicate and pearly tints for which the painter was famed.

The Samson, of the same master, is a delightful specimen for energy, colour, and effect.

Ludovico Caracci's Transfiguration, in which six figures are introduced, is admirably composed, even to the very sweep of their fine draperies. The Virgin and Two Saints, and the Conversion of St. Paul, of the same painter, are two works of a high order.

Annibale Caracci's Virgin is replete with sweetness and grace; and Agostino's St. Jerome is a very striking and grand composition. The foregoing are perhaps among the best pictures of this small but interesting gallery.

It now remains to say something of a few of the palaces and their galleries.

At the Palazzo Zampieri I saw four vigorous frescos of the Caracci and Guercino upon the ceilings of different rooms.

Ludovico Caracci adorned the ceiling of the Vestibule with Jupiter and Hercules; whilst Annibale has painted the apotheosis of Hercules in a second ceiling; and Agostino chose for his subject, on the third, Hercules and Atlas supporting the globe. In Guercino's fresco he has displayed much skill in foreshortening. The

subject is Hercules strangling Antæus. The effect of these frescos is lost for want of sufficient light, which is to be regretted.

The finest paintings of this ancient palace were sold for the Brera at Milan. Some of those left behind are doubtless merely good copies—which it would, however, require the examination of the most skilful to detect. In pictures we have a Venus by Titian. Two portraits, one of which is a likeness of himself, by Vandyck. Death of Dido, Conversion of Saint Paul, and portraits by the Caracci.

In a small room at the end of the gallery there are some drawings by the old masters—a clever picture of Christ crowned with Thorns by Agostino Caracci, and an unfinished, pretty Cupid asleep, by Guido. The best pictures were placed in rich, curious frames, with curtains drawn over them. The ceilings appear too low, and the rooms are insufficiently lighted for such a collection. The Marquis Zampieri lives with his family in another house. I understand his daughters are very accomplished, and speak several languages with great fluency. The marquis pays great attention to all such foreigners as are properly introduced to him.

The immense Palazzo Ercolane, with its large saloons, is worthy of an emperor; but the revenue of the family has dwindled down to very little. The gallery is spacious, although the collection of works of art is scanty. Among the pictures, I saw Guido's favourite subject of Fortune, which is brilliant in colour as noonday.

There are some specimens attributed to Spagnoletto and Domenichino—doubtful, I think; and a fine head of Christ, by one of the Caracci. I was struck with two rich mosaic tables, composed of precious stones and marbles, unique even in this land of mosaic workers.

To the Palazzo Zambeccari I have more pleasure in directing your attention. Here we once more get among some good pictures. Of Guercino there are two fine specimens; one a sleeping Magdalen, the other a hermit kneeling. Jacob's Dream, Abraham, and two other subjects from the prolific pencil of Ludovico Caracci, are finely designed. Charles V., by Titian, and a Cardinal, beautifully finished, by Domenichino, are capital portraits.

Of Albano there are several small sacred

subjects, highly finished and delicate. A pair of wild landscapes, by Salvator Rosa; and a picture—said to be his first—painted by Annibale Caracci. Some of these paintings are in frames inlaid with marble and precious stones. There is a Descent from the Cross, carved in silver—a *bijou*—by Benvenuto Cellini, which is most delicately executed.

At the Palazzo Marescalchi there is a collection which should be seen; but as you have doubtless read enough about pictures for the present, I shall conclude my remarks.

I am rather surprised at meeting with so few English travellers sojourning here quietly to see this interesting city. The principal inns are crowded with our nobility and gentry; but they always appear to be arriving and departing in a flurry, as if an enemy were in full chase after them. They certainly make a triste plaisir of travelling, and lose the favourable opportunities of examining hundreds of objects, which thousands of other persons, less favoured by fortune, sigh in vain to behold.

To the studious and religious, Bologna offers

much that is worthy of their observation; and the bon vivant may indulge in the pleasures of the table at a very moderate cost. Every artist who is journeying through Italy for improvement, should consider Bologna as a fit resting place for study and contemplation, if he wish to become acquainted with some of the most choice and beautiful specimens of the Lombard school; which, if it did not produce a Raphael, a Michael Angelo, or a Titian, gave birth to the Caracci, who held up those unrivalled geniuses as the leading models in painting for the student's unceasing study. The consequence was, the school of the Caracci made painters of those men who were only second to the great Roman, Florentine, and Venetian painters, and who were worthy of following in the course of the most brilliant stars that ever shed a lustre on the art.

So far as glancing at the surface will allow me to judge, I should say the Bolognese possess a free, English-like spirit; they are courteous and affable in their disposition, and retain, in a partial degree, that love of liberty which so often animated their ancestors.

The English character is much more congenial to them than the French; and there is an evident disposition on their part to shew attentions to our countrymen.

LETTER VI.

Travelling between Bologna and Ferrara.—Ferrara.—Embarkation on the Po.—Passengers.—Chiozza.—First appearance of Venice.—Sunset.—Night.—Arrival at Venice.—Landing.

VENICE, 23d October, 1826.

ON the 19th, I left Bologna at day-break for Venice, and the country through which I travelled was full of flats and swamps. It was not on that account the less productive, and seemed to abound in rice,—with occasional meadows, corn fields, and vines.

I entered a farm-yard close to the road. It was paved with bricks, with rice in the shell laid down in heaps for transport to Bologna—to be there separated and prepared for consumption. In another part of the yard, men were busy separating the ears of rice from the stalks, by means of a cutting machine upon wheels. Some of the better houses on this road have not even glazed windows, and the cottages are generally thatched. After crossing

the Reno, I reached Ferrara. This is a fortified town, but dull, forsaken, and dilapidated.

The Ducal Palace, with its clumsy towers, has its moat, draw-bridge, and gates separated from the town by a brick wall.

The ancient cathedral is crumbling to ruin, and has rather a fine appearance. In front of its principal gate are twisted pillars, resting on the backs of men, placed on those of lions. They are covered with bassi relievi of angels and martyrs. Over the centre is a statue of the Virgin and Child. Having consulted my guide-book, which mentions there being some fine pictures of the Caracci and Guercino in the churches, I entered the cathedral in eager expectation; but instead of such paintings, I was sadly disappointed in seeing a dreary, dirty church, infested by a band of ragged beggars.

In the square of Ariosto, there is a carved pillar, once surmounted by a bust of Napoleon. Ariosto's house is outside of the walls, and his tomb is in the university. During a ramble through the town, my conductor pointed out two buildings, called the Diamond Palace and the Lion Palace—both capacious and finely designed, but in sad decay. The principal street

is of great length and breadth, but many of its houses are without window-sashes, and filled with vermin.

At one end of the city there is a cemetery, which was opened in 1813; it is after the plan of that of Bologna. Some of the old gardens are ornamented with vases or statues, partly covered with weeds. Every object here, in short, is in a state of wretchedness and neglect, and the damp, clammy town is surrounded by marshes, which render it unhealthy.

I was detained nearly two days for the courier's boat, at the inn of the Three Moors, where bad fare, incivility, and imposition had to be endured.

On the 21st I bade an unregretting adieu to the dank walls of Ferrara. After a pleasant drive of three miles to the Po, which I crossed, I found an Italian lady, with her two daughters, and a Frenchman, embarked at Ponte del Lago Scuro in the government passage-boat, which is about as confined and dirty a conveyance as can be imagined. The ladies were very chatty, and we all got soon acquainted. At eleven o'clock the female passengers laid themselves down on two covered benches, whilst the Frenchman

and I, wrapped in our cloaks, sought repose on the cabin floor. The old lady, however, could not sleep, as she was afraid of some accident befalling us in the night; nor would she permit any one to enjoy a nap, as she was desirous of being diverted from her nocturnal reveries by unbosoming her fears. My companion on the floor was annoyed at such unseasonable interruptions, and on his feigning an ignorance of the Italian language, the old dame had recourse to French; but we both assured her, that as the night was calm, and she had a good boat under her, there were no reasonable grounds for the slightest apprehension. These assurances had the desired effect; the mother took her last pinch of snuff, kissed a small crucifix and placed it on her pillow, where her own chatter-box was soon lodged, and in a few minutes she snored unutterable things.

At day-break I left my hard plank, to gaze over the waters of the Po. On each side of the river the farm-houses were surrounded with marshes; and the villages appeared miserably dirty. Occasional small herds of cattle were feeding in the fields, lowing to each other, and

frisking about, as if they enjoyed the morning air.

At two o'clock on Sunday afternoon, the snail-creeping bark left the winding Po, with its many mouths.

> ..... "Quo non alius per pinguia culta
> In mare purpureum violentior influit amnis."

Symptoms of Venice appeared at Chiozza, where the houses partly rise from the sea, and are joined by single arches to the island. A few merchant-vessels and boats were lying alongside the wharf, where a number of the islanders, in their lively costumes, were lounging, and sailors were sitting basking in the sun.

The islands of Palestrina and Malamocco, and various smaller islands, made their appearance on the smooth gulf as we glided along; some of those on the horizon were like so many grey dots, balanced in the azure atmosphere. We passed close to the great stone wall constructed on the Lido di Palestrina. It connects several islands in the Lagunes, and is intended as a bulwark against the heavy rolling

seas in this gulf during stormy weather, which would otherwise devastate Venice and the surrounding isles. Some of these islands are fortified, and piles are fixed between them for nautical purposes.

It would be impossible to have approached Venice under more favourable circumstances; the atmosphere being clear, and the sea with scarcely a ripple on its surface. The descending sun was scattering his beams through rolling masses of warm clouds, over marble palaces, spires, towers, and cupolas rising from the sea: and floating streets of gorgeous and noble architecture, appearing more defined as we approached, at last gradually disappeared, when

> "The sun
> Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
> To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale
> Of heav'n the stars that usher evening rose."

The Campanile, in the square of St. Mark, is the highest tower in Venice, and rises majestically over the city, with its archangel standing on the summit, pointing to the heavens. If the figure were intended to represent the guardian angel of this once remarkable republic, the locale chosen is most appropriate.

All that my fancy imagined of Venice fell far short of the reality. Its buildings of Grecian and Roman architectural splendour, which are mingled with infusions of the Saracenic and Gothic styles, its churches and palaces, apparently floating on the bosom of the ocean, are indescribably striking, when viewed for the first time, tinged with the sparkling colours of the setting sun. Imagine to yourself one of Claude's cities at sunset, with the sun's rays kissing the waves, and throwing vistas of palaces into a glowing light and shade, and you may form some distant idea of my first near view of Venice. When the sun sank below the horizon, the blue masses of building rising from the sea, and gradually merging into black, with a galaxy of sparkling stars in the serene sky, formed a striking contrast to the past glories of the day.

The midnight hour tolled from all the church clocks as we reached the canal which leads to the post-office. A dead silence reigned throughout the watery windings leading to our destination, save the occasional stir of a passing gondola on the canal. Glimmering lights were distinguishable from the windows of some of the palaces, and from the gondolas lashed to

poles under their marble terraces. We looked in vain for a lover serenading his mistress;—not even the tinkling of a guitar was to be heard on land or sea.

When our boat was moored, we were told that no passenger would be allowed to stir before sunrise. Stretched on the floor, in my cloak, I beheld all the scenes of yesterday once more in my dreams. At half past seven o'clock I was roused from these visions by the appearance of two custom-house officers to examine our baggage, which operation was gone through in the most rigid manner. Being an English officer, I believe I was less annoyed than the other passengers. I left the ladies full of ire at their rough treatment, and the poor Frenchman pacing the deck in a rage, as the officers unfolded all the garments his huge trunk contained. On landing, I was conducted to an hotel in a narrow passage, close to the square of St. Mark, where I found a civil valet de place, with whom I made arrangements for seeing this remarkable city.

LETTER VII.

Venice.—First Impressions.—Grand Canal.—Rialto.—Mixed Architecture.—Piazzetta.—Granite Columns.—Square of St. Mark.—St. Mark's Church.—Campanile.—Ducal Palace.—Its Paintings.—Dungeon of the Inquisition.—Arsenal.—Gardens.

VENICE, 26th Oct., 1826.

ALTHOUGH Venice is familiar to every reader, from the innumerable histories, travels, romances, plays and poems already written, I hope I shall not fatigue you by a short account of some of the many lions that may come under my observation.

For the few days I shall remain here, all objects will be seen in such rapid succession as to leave little time for reflection, or any very correct conclusions.

Every stranger, during his first perambulations, must be forcibly impressed with many features of a singular and novel description. The streets have a remarkable air of quietude,

in consequence of the absence of horses and carriages. No rattling of wheels or heavy waggons; no trampling of spirited horses, offers any annoyance to the pedestrian as he threads his way through the narrow streets. He finds himself constantly moving over bridges; sometimes obliged to step into a gondola to gain some square, church, or street, or for the sake of cutting off angles, to save time.

Venice presents a number of crowded buildings, erected on no less than seventy-two islets, or raised on piles; and some of these might pass for separate towns, were it not for the connecting bridges or ferries. Most of the palaces, and many of the churches, are built from the water's edge; and one must become a sort of amphibious animal to be enabled to examine the architecture with any satisfaction. A façade or terrace seems frequently floating upon the sea, and it must be viewed from the cushioned gondola. If you wish to see it from other points, a landing will perhaps be necessary for a short time. At other times you may repose for hours in your water-carriage, in the enjoyment of that extraordinary variety of architectural beauties and strange combinations

which no other city can boast of. Churches, palaces, and shops are jumbled together; and here and there some trees are planted. Whole streets are going rapidly to decay, and some of the deserted palaces are converted into workshops on the basement stories, while those above are used by laundresses for drying linen, who are accustomed to hang shirts, petticoats, &c., over balconies, or on the shoulders of marble statues. In the still higher stories, pigeons and swallows are seen flying to and fro in undisturbed security.

The Grand Canal traverses the city in a graceful curve. Its great breadth (which in some parts is 300 feet) shews the marble palaces on either hand to much advantage: and, when the day is unclouded, the buildings reflected in the shallow lagunes, add considerably to the beauty of the scene. The best way, perhaps, to see the Grand Canal, is to hire a gondola at the shabby end of it, near the church of San Chiara. There are no striking features previous to reaching that part of the canal a few hundred yards below the Rialto, where it becomes wider.

The far-famed Rialto is a bold elliptic arch,

light and elegant in itself, but encumbered with two rows of shops, placed over it, which injure the design materially. In ancient times the merchants made it their Exchange; Shylock complains of the scurvy treatment he met with from the Christians, "where merchants most did congregate".

In one of my excursions the gondolier experienced some difficulty in steering clear of barges loaded with fruit and vegetables moored near the Rialto, where an extensive market is held. It was early in the morning—the canal was covered with gondolas, and the peasants were hastening to mass at some neighbouring churches. The church bells were tolling in various keys, the market folks loudly vociferating, and some of their dogs chained to the barges barking furiously at the passing gondolas. I did not suppose that this dull town could have produced such an abomination of jarring discords.

During a period of nine hundred years, from the seventh to the sixteenth century, the Venetians were among the richest and most civilized people in Europe. The maritime strength of the republic was very formidable for those days; and the numerous conquests made by its enterpris-

ing commanders, gave the people a decided taste for the luxury, show, and fashions of distant nations. We can easily imagine a rich ambassador returning to Venice from Athens or Rome, with a fresh taste and refinement, and employing one of the best architects of the day to erect a palace of the Grecian or Roman order; while some republican general, loaded perhaps with Eastern spoils, and whose taste might be less classic, would rear a Gothic imitation of what he had been accustomed to see and admire among the Turks or Saracens. May this not be one way of accounting for that strange association of the works of a Sansovino or a Palladio with the costly, nondescript palaces of Eastern aspect?

During my first excursion on the Grand Canal, the gondolier pointed to a palace whose balcony was crowded with English ladies and gentlemen. At the same moment he exclaimed, "Questo è il Palazzo Inglese". It was the Albergo della Gran Bretagna,—a building of vast dimensions, formerly inhabited by a noble family, the Farsetti. Not far from the Rialto lies the palace of the last Doge—quite forsaken and crumbling to pieces. The very window-

sashes have been dislodged, and the cavities boarded up.

Several squares and noble churches, of a striking character, are seen to advantage from the centre of this canal. As you now approach the Royal Gardens, the Mint, and the royal palace, the combination of the different objects and various styles in the architecture become extremely interesting. The Grand Canal now merges into the canal of the Giudecca; and the islands of San Giorgio Maggiore and Giudecca appear on the right hand, covered with many beautiful towers, churches, public buildings, and palaces.

At the custom-house, nearly opposite the Royal Gardens, foreign vessels may be seen lying, or preparing to depart; and the sea is covered with hundreds of boats and gondolas, of various sizes, freighted with passengers or goods.

Having reached the canal of the Giudecca, (where the gaily decked Bucentaur and noisy regatta have often amused the citizens in their golden days,) I landed at the Piazzetta, after being rowed through the Great Canal, where there is always a crowd of people. Divers knots of Jews, idlers, and gondoliers were engaged in vociferous dialogues or noisy games.

Indolent Turks and Greeks were parading in their picturesque costumes on the broad quay. They were quite a contrast—being wrapt up in silent nothings, and redolent of the tobacco fumes drawn from their long pipes. Many Venetian ladies and gentlemen were assembled in the arcades of the Mint and the ancient library, which runs along one side of the Piazzetta. The Ducal Palace, opposite, was surrounded by swarms of petty traders in old china, bits of iron, shoes, hats, kettles, knives, &c.—as great a set of ragamuffins and bravo-looking fellows as can well be imagined.

Two columns of granite stand on the Piazzetta. A statue of St. Theodore adorns the top of the column next the royal palace; and St. Mark's winged lion stands over the other, near the Ducal Palace. The promenade in front is the most open and lively in Venice. The islands of Giudecca and St. Giorgio Maggiore lie opposite, covered with noble buildings and small gardens, with the azure sea beyond.

By continuing along the Piazzetta to the corner of the royal palace, the piazza of St. Mark is reached. This square is surrounded with venerable and magnificent buildings. It

is of an oblong form, 800 feet long by 350 broad. Three of its sides consist of public buildings and palaces, with handsome arcades fronting the ground-stories, which are now converted into shops and coffee-houses. The remaining side is terminated by the mosquish church of St. Mark. As a piece of architecture, this celebrated church is of the mongrel order. The whole is more like the confused dream of an architect than a regular design—for there is nothing definable about it. Still there is considerable grandeur in the general effect,—arising, perhaps, from its venerable air, the richness of its component parts, and valuable accessories. The façade projects from the church, and stretches across its entire front; and on the summit of the former there is a marble gallery. Underneath the gallery, and forming its support, are five arches leading to as many doors—the centre being the largest. The lower part of each arch is ornamented by two rows of tiny columns, composed of porphyry and verde-antico. Over the marble gallery are replaced the four celebrated brazen steeds of Lysippus. The situation chosen for them, however, is rather strange; —they would have been seen to much greater

advantage on a raised pedestal in the centre of St. Mark's Square, or between the two pillars of the Piazzetta. In either situation, they would have been most ornamental and curious objects, in a city where no living models of the race are ever seen.

Behind the horses there is a large circular window, and two arched doors communicating with the interior of the church. Pointed Gothic arches surmount the façade, with alternate pinnacles crowned by statues of grim saints. Four clumsy leaden cupolas (two small near the front, and two larger behind) rise from the roof. I am now alluding to what is seen in front,—but there is a fifth cupola, which is hidden.

These cupolas give a mosque-like appearance to the building, which would have been infinitely more consistent and handsome with a lofty Gothic spire, or two towers shooting boldly up from the roof.

This singular church was originally erected in the year 831, while Giovanne Participatio was Doge of Venice, for the reception of the remains of St. Mark the Evangelist, which, as the story goes, were transported hither clandestinely from Egypt. Mosaics and gilding are scattered in

tasteless profusion among the arches and over the gates. Minarets intervene among the arches over the balcony, with saints in their niches; and are continued round the body of the church.

The interior of St. Mark's Church is absolutely crammed with embellishment in mosaic, gilding, the rarest marbles and precious stones. The plan of the church is a Greek cross, with a cupola reared over each of the five points, and a circular recess at the extremity. The central avenue is separated from the side-aisles by marble columns supporting arches, with a gallery over them.

One day I witnessed an interior worthy of Rembrandt's magic pencil. The unobstructed rays of the sun were streaming over various parts of this singular and rich pile during the performance of high mass. The costume of the priesthood, with the groups of persons of both sexes kneeling around, increased the effect, and produced a coup d'œil of a very interesting and picturesque description. The touching strains of the well-trained vocalists, blended with the deep peals of the organ, drew the mind insensibly into a contemplative mood, and en-

hanced the solemnity of the feeling produced by the appearance of the building itself.

The mosaic artists of Venice were in some estimation in Titian's time, and employed by the government to embellish the churches with their works. They copied the designs of Titian and his cotemporaries, and a few of these mosaics are in St. Mark's Church.

After leaving St. Mark's Church, I examined the Loggia, at the base of the Campanile, which is a happy combination of solidity and elegance. I then entered the Campanile, and mounted to the summit, the ascent to which is effected by a series of inclined planes. From this position of 330 feet above the square, I enjoyed a fine view of Padua and the Euganean hills beyond it, through my travelling companion—an excellent telescope. Galileo made observations of the stars and some discoveries from this spot, by means of powerful telescopes of his own construction.

Three red poles are fixed in the square opposite the façade of St. Mark's Church, on which were hoisted the flags of Cyprus, Candia, and the Morea,—three vassal kingdoms of the proud republic in its powerful days.

During the republic, the ducal palace was in-

habited by the doge; and its halls also afforded accommodation for the three state inquisitors and government officers. It was erected in the ninth century; but considerable alterations were made in its arrangements during the fourteenth century, by the Doge Marino Faliero. It covers three sides of a quadrangle, with its façade towards the Giudecca Canal. The ponderous walls rest upon diminutive arches, which proclaim the wretched taste of the architect of this Saracenic pile.

The principal entrance is from the side near St. Mark's Church, called the Giant's Staircase. On the summit are two colossal marble statues of Mars and Neptune, which were placed there in 1566. They are emblems of the Venetian power by land and sea at the above period.

It would be impossible in a letter to give you any idea of the saloons and chambers of this immense building, or of the pictures, statues, frescos, and ornaments within and without its walls, which would require days instead of hours to examine in a satisfactory way. Titian, Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, Palma, and various other artists were employed on the

paintings and frescos which cover its walls and ceilings.

Titian's picture of the Triumph of Faith is in the Sala di Quattro Porte, amidst dust and darkness. It was dragged to Paris, and back again to where it now hangs. The restorers have had their fingers upon it.

The Sala del Gran Consiglio is 152 feet long, 72 broad, and 38 high. From the balcony of the principal window there is a fine view of the islands opposite, and the Giudecca and Grand canals. The ceiling is painted in fresco, with allegorical representations of the acts of the republic, surrounded by a richly gilded moulding. Underneath are placed the portraits of the doges. There is, however, a single exception, where a black veil is substituted for the portrait, and under it is written,—

"Hic est locus Marini Falieri
Decapitati pro criminibus."

The hall of the Pregadi is filled with the works of Titian, Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, and Palma.

In the Sala del Consiglio di dieci, the five

compartments of the ceiling, painted by Paul Veronese, represent the symbols which belonged to the authority of that grim tribunal.

In this hall there is an immense picture of the Last Judgment, by Tintoretto; a confused composition, unworthy of the master. Under it, the doge used to take his station on his throne.

Looking towards the canal that is crossed by the Bridge of Sighs, are the hall and dungeons of the State Inquisition. The room in which the three grand inquisitors assembled was draped with black cloth; and Tintoretto painted on its ceiling the different Virtues holding in their hands the instruments of torture. It communicates by trap doors to dungeons sunk in the thick walls, where wretched prisoners breathed an impure air and pined in solitude, or awaited a trial which too often doomed them to be strangled.

A stranger cannot visit these dens without painful sensations. Whatever objections there may be to a foreign yoke, the Venetians have gained something, on the other hand, by being emancipated from their sanguinary Council of Ten and inquisitors. For from their terrible

gripe no man could escape, if any blood-thirsty denouncer marked him as a victim.

After leaving the ducal palace I visited the arsenal. It occupies an island at the eastern extremity of Venice, and is surrounded by strong walls and towers. Over the principal gate is a statue of St. Justin. On one side is a marble lion of colossal dimensions, sent from Athens by a Venetian general; and on the other are two lionesses, part of the spoils taken at Corinth during the conquests of the Republic over the Porte in the seventeenth century.

An establishment, on a small scale, is still kept up here by the Austrian government. A number of persons are employed in spinning hemp and manufacturing sail-cloth. A ship of war, mounting fifty-four guns, is at this moment on the stocks for the Turkish government. What a singular change of circumstances! In the days of republican strength, the ships which were launched in those docks were destined to wield their thunder against the Ottoman power.

The Hall of Models contains a model of the Bucentaur, with its admirals and rowers at

their posts, as when she carried the doge in state to wed the Adriatic.

There is a curious collection of ancient armour and instruments of torture in one of the rooms. Among these relics are a superb helmet and shield worn by the Doge Ziani, some handsome Turkish fusees, and a silk standard thirty feet long, taken at the battle of Lepanto.

The public gardens are on a small neck of land near the arsenal, where a few rows of stunted trees and some shrubs are planted. They command an excellent view of the principal canals, part of the city, and neighbouring islands. They appear, however, to be quite deserted, as the squares and piazzas are the general resorts of the sluggish Venetians, where they sip their coffee, smoke, and attend the ridotto by turns.

San Luca is the only opera house open at present. Last night I witnessed the performance of the opera of La Rosa Bianca, which was wretchedly cast, although the house was well attended.

It is necessary to be here during the carnival, if to see Venice roused into life and bustle be the object. At that season all the theatres

are open with superior performers; a continued masquerade and revelry enliven its piazzas and dull streets.

The carnival is no longer the extraordinary attraction it used to be; as the present masters of Venice have very little taste for masks and dominos. The true Venetians, however, still save a purse to make fools of themselves, if not indeed to do something still worse, at that season of universal gaiety.

LETTER VIII.

Remarks on Venice.—Gondolas.—Gondoliers.—Visit to Churches.—Titian's Pictures, &c.—Palaces.—By-gone splendour.—Austrian Government.—State of Society.

VENICE, 27th October, 1826.

THIS is a city of palaces and churches; if we regarded the numbers of the latter, with the incessant clang of bells in every quarter, we should be inclined to conclude that the Venetians did nothing but go to church. Such an idea soon vanishes, however, when a stranger takes a round among the churches, as on entering them only a few devotees are seen scattered over them, kneeling before some favourite saint or wax relic, or seeking spiritual comfort at the confessional; while the doorways are infested with beggars, depending on the generosity of their more fortunate brethren.

The gondola is one of the most convenient and comfortable conveyances imaginable, for

seeing such a city as Venice. It is admirably constructed for rapid movement and safety, and as it skims through the lagunes, the passenger can shut himself up in the snug covered seat in the centre, unseen, but seeing every thing around; or the door and windows can be thrown open ad libitum.

The gondoliers, like the lazzaroni of Naples, are droll and good-humoured. They are bustling and active, and civil and attentive to their employers. During a stroll on the Piazzetta, I happened to fall in with a hearty fellow named Antonio, who was my constant conductor through the canals and amongst the neighbouring islands during my sojourn. Antonio was a man of consequence among the gondoliers, and was always appealed to amidst their differences. He settled most disputes; and inveterate enemies and sticklers on the most knotty points were mute in his presence, whilst arranging their differences.

The mind of Antonio was alwa[illegible] well regulated, and inclined to impress its [illegible] on his fellow creatures. It was impo[illegible] to be dull in his company. Of Tasso's verses Antonio knew nothing, but he was a living chro-

nicle of all the saints in the kalendar, martyrdoms, and miracles; and he could tell you the history of half the nobles in Venice, and the peccadillos of most of the fair intriguers and inconstants of the last carnival, as he was frequently employed in confidential night meetings, abductions, and water parties. In such matters as the last, Antonio was enjoined to secrecy by the husbands and wives by turns, each party believing, that

> "He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
> Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all."

Yesterday morning, after an early breakfast, I stepped into Antonio's gondola from the Piazzetta, determined to see as many of the most remarkable buildings as I could, before sunset.

I landed on a tongue of land nearly opposite the Piazzetta, where the custom-house is situated. On a square tower at its summit, is a gilded globe of the World supporting a figure of Dame Fortune, which is the true emblem of fickleness, as she is jerked round by every wind that blows. There was but little commerce stirring here, and the only vessels with freights

to load or unload, were two Austrian brigs and an English ship. There were many boats and dark gondolas round them, scudding to and fro, with their polished beaks glittering in the sun. Antonio appeared to know a number of the gondoliers, as he had something to say to most of them as we passed through their small fleet.

The church of San Salvadore, near the custom-house, is an imposing design. It underwent alterations by Sansovino, and afterwards by Scamozzi. Over one of the altars is a painting of the Annunciation, by Titian. Some former sovereigns of the state are inurned here under costly monuments. The two Priuli are of the number.

This church, as a picture, combines beautifully with the custom-house, from various points of view. In turning round the custom-house to the right, is the broad canal of the Giudecca, whence a noble view presents itself of some of the best parts of Venice, and the islands of San Giorgio Maggiore and Giudecca, with their churches, towers, and gardens.

The church of San Giorgio Maggiore, a design of Palladio, has a charming effect from the Piazzetta. It is not considered one of the ar-

chitect's purest designs, but nevertheless possesses some attractions. The bronze figures of the Evangelists at the great altar, are striking works. The organ is judiciously placed in the choir, and the whole building is finely lighted. From its steps you can enjoy the most striking architectural combinations in the city—perhaps in the world. Hence you contemplate the Piazzetta crowded with life; the domes of St. Mark's, the Campanile, and the public palaces, with the gondola-covered lagune underneath.

On the neighbouring island of the Giudecca, is the Redentore, another of Palladio's churches. It is perhaps one of his best designs. Viewed from the water, the symmetrical proportions of the portico are finely seen. The cupola has an imposing appearance, although the lateral pinnacled towers, of which Palladio seemed to be fond, appear only to encumber the design. The interior plan is full of simplicity and harmonious proportions. Over two of the altars are pictures by Tintoretto. The subjects are the Ascension, and the Scourging of Christ.

The church of Santa Maria della Salute was erected to commemorate the deliverance of the city from a devastating plague in 1630. Al-

though on a grander scale than the last, it is less pleasing; as the eye gets tired of walls and façades so exuberant in angles, niches, and figures. Its beautifully turned cupola, however, is most striking, and perhaps the finest in Venice. The interior is richly decorated, and very well lighted; and the principal altar is attractive both in design and accompaniments. The ceiling of the choir is moulded into compartments, four of which are the Evangelists; said to be painted by Titian.

The church of the Gesuiti has a rich façade, covered, or rather encumbered, with statuary. The angels kneeling over the pediment at the top have a novel but pleasing appearance. The Martyrdom of San Lorenzo, by Titian, adorns its interior:—a revolting subject, treated in a powerful manner. The walls are covered with Carrara marble, inlaid with verde antico, in imitation of drapery, executed with wonderful skill.

In the church of San Giovanni e Paolo is Titian's most celebrated picture of San Pietro Martire. The saint on the ground suffering martyrdom is in a monk's dress, and at the first glance the spectator cannot help shuddering at

the sight. The flying figure increases the emotion: he is also habited as a monk. The drapery is thrown into noble folds by the momentary action of the figure; and the black hood scattered behind the yellow part of the dress, increases the sentiment of the picture. The general effect is also enhanced by the same simple means, as will be found in tracing the balancing tones throughout the colouring. The high solitary thicket in the background is quite suited to the fearful subject; and forms a study for the landscape painter.

The church of the Frari, or conventual friars of the order of the Cordeliers, although plain in its exterior, has some interior attractions, and is a spacious building.

Another very celebrated picture by Titian adorns one of the altars. The subject consists of the Virgin with the Child in her arms, seated over St. Peter, who is leaning on an altar, and casting his eyes towards a noble figure of St. George. On the opposite side, St. Francis is looking up to Christ, and recommending to his heavenly protection the Pesaro family, several of whom are kneeling. The youngest of the

family, in a white dress, looking towards the spectator, is a lovely portrait, and forms a charming contrast to the elder branches. The dress also assists the general effect, and carries off (in painters' phrase) the white head-dress of the Virgin. Nothing can surpass the natural dignity and simplicity of the kneeling figures. The colouring is in the most brilliant manner of the master. This work is alluded to by Sir Joshua Reynolds as an example of grandeur and simplicity, arising out of the regularity of the composition.

The venerable Titian was carried off by the plague in 1576, after having lived within a year of a century. His sacred remains were deposited in this church, and a simple tablet records his death. It is contemplated to raise some monument near the spot, to Canova, the greatest Italian sculptor of modern times.

Having taken a general view of the most remarkable churches, I shall say something of the princely palaces of Venice.

The Manfrini contains the richest private collection of pictures in Venice. Four works especially possess considerable attractions. They

are the Lucretia of Guido; a St. Cecilia of Carlo Dolce; a group of Giorgione; and the portrait of Ariosto by Titian.

In Giorgione's composition he has introduced himself, his mistress, and child. This is quite an effort con amore. The female is admirably painted and full of the Italian character. Giorgione has often painted his mistress in other subjects, in puris naturalibus.

At the Grimani Palace I found easy access. The entrance is not inviting—the pavement of the court being dilapidated, and the walls of the palace having a shabby appearance. The rooms are lighted by Gothic windows, and are finely finished. I spent a couple of hours in examining its small collection of pictures and statuary. A marble bust of Caracalla struck me as being strongly characteristic of that brutal tyrant.

The statue of a Greek orator in his robes is replete with dignity and manliness. The folds of the drapery are well composed and in keeping with the figure.

A bust of one of the ancient Grimani, exhibits a care-worn countenance and much nature.

Two Grecian bassi relievi of Orestes and Pylades, are very beautiful, and in excellent condition.

Among the pictures I saw two of Titian's portraits—full lengths of Antonio Grimani and another member of the family.

A specimen of Palma il Giovine is in another room, the subject being the crowning of our Saviour with thorns. There are some fine parts in the composition, but the head of the Saviour—a frequent failure among painters—is vulgar and unmeaning. Two of the saloons are painted in a curious taste by Giovanne Udine and Giorgione. The walls of one of them are covered with a wood scene by the former artist; and another has its ceiling painted by Giorgione, representing the four elements—cleverly executed.

The principal buildings of this city generally rest on Etruscan foundations. A shelter for mooring gondolas is attached to them, closed by a gate; the richer classes priding themselves on their retinue of gondoliers and handsomely furnished gondolas. The spacious dwellings of the ancient aristocracy were built in a convenient style, and adapted for the ease and accommoda-

tion of their luxurious inhabitants. On entering a Venetian palace you are not disappointed, as the vestibule, the broad marble staircase, and the spacious apartments, correspond with the character of its external design. Such mansions were of course reared in a season of golden prosperity, when the arts ministered to the refined tastes of the Venetians; and feasting, music, and masking occupied so much of the time and thoughts of these lords of the Adriatic.

On all occasions of church festivals, or the assembling of parties for the revelry of the carnival, the palaces of the higher orders and patrician merchants were thrown open. Tapestry and drapery, of the most costly workmanship, at such seasons were displayed from the windows and balustrades. During favourable weather the gay throng promenaded in the saloons, or under awnings drawn over the projecting balconies, which were sprinkled with the perfumes of the East, and covered with a multitude of rare plants and exotics.

All the rank, fashion, and beauty of Venice, appeared on these occasions attired in their rich and picturesque costumes; while the ambassadors of foreign courts, and distinguished strangers,

mingled in the company. It was among these *tableaux vivans* of beauty, grace, and elegance that the poet strung his lyre, and the great painters selected models and groups for their canvass. These days of Venetian splendour are past, never to return; we cannot wonder that Venice is now degraded and a dependant on a stronger power. On the contrary, our astonishment ought rather to be excited by the anomaly of the Venetian republic existing for eleven centuries, surrounded by powerful kingdoms.

There is always something in an insular situation decidedly favourable to an enduring independence, when wisely governed and protected by naval superiority. We know that to considerable foresight, industry, a monopoly of eastern trade, and brave, skilful navigators, Venice owed almost entirely her former wealth and independence. She was, however, indebted to the jealousies of greater nations, too long occupied in destroying each other, for her long lease of freedom, which was finally extinguished by the overpowering armies of Napoleon.

Many severe censures have been passed by English writers against the Austrian government

for its oppressive dominion of its Italian provinces. Austria, although very powerful, is loaded with a national debt, which demands the levying of heavy taxes,—and sometimes, as charity begins at home, she squeezes as much money as she can out of the purses of the poor Italians. The Venetians, however, complain that a very small portion of what they pay in taxes, is circulated on this side of the Tyrol. The golden stream finds a passage through the Alps, and leaves a naked mine behind.

The Austrians, to be sure, are rather hard task-masters towards the Venetians in another point of view, as too many of the situations under government have been gradually taken from natives and given to Austrians;—certainly a gross injustice towards the Venetians, which has naturally estranged them in no ordinary degree from their rulers. Many of these German functionaries have an imperfect knowledge of the Italian language, and are still more ignorant of the Italian character.

From these facts it may be easily imagined how wretchedly the machinery of the government is worked. As an illustration of the passport system, I need only mention, that no per-

son can visit *terra firma* without a passport from the police; and let the business of the individual be ever so urgent, a delay of one, two, or three days sometimes occurs, before this wretched privilege is granted.

The newspapers of Vienna are not allowed to be translated and reprinted until they have been examined by the police censors, who expunge whatever they please. There is therefore a tolerably harmless infusion of politics.

Many of the higher and richer families have emigrated to various parts of Europe, having previously converted their immovable property into money at a great loss, or shut up palaces which are crumbling piecemeal, and are only occasionally opened by their owners for a week or two during the Carnival. Some few who sigh at leaving their native city, still linger behind, and meet occasionally in a corner of their palaces, to condole with each other on their fallen estate.

There is plenty of midnight dissipation among the mixed societies of the coffee-houses under the piazza of St. Mark, where all classes can eat, drink, and be merry at a small expense. For the sacrifice of a few golden ducats, it is

easy to become acquainted with some remnants of higher society, depressed by ennui, who make cards and dice their chief employment; but thoughtless and inexperienced strangers may find out that such company would be better avoided.

The few entertainments now given, occur generally during the Carnival, in private houses, or at the public casinos. Admission to these parties is easily obtained by respectable strangers, who are treated with politeness and affability. The casinos are fitted up in an elegant style, and the amusements they afford consist of music and cards; games of hazard are however forbidden by law.

The Venetian ladies are for the most part handsome. Their dark eyes are sparkling and expressive; and when animated by conversation or music, winning smiles play about as pretty mouths and dimpled cheeks as can be well imagined. There is a finished elegance in the Venetian manners; and the dialect, in the mouth of the genteel Donna Veneziana, has a peculiar softness.

Marriages are to this day often arranged by parents, without any consultation with the des-

tined pair. On such occasions the parties only meet on the eve of these unnatural alliances; and they consequently lead but too frequently, to disagreement and infidelity.

The men are generally of the middle size, and well-made. Their deportment is full of ease and elegance, and they have the happy talent of soon rendering strangers easy in their company. Several of the casinos are exclusively reserved for noblemen and gentlemen of different professions. Here they congregate, and talk without restraint on the topics of the hour; play at cards, or pass the time in reading.

LETTER IX.

The Accademia and its Pictures.—Convent.—Evening Walk.—Piazza of St. Mark.—Shops.—Supplies to Venice.

VENICE, 28th October, 1826.

I SHALL conclude what I have to say of Venice in this Letter, as to-morrow morning I shall take my departure for Milan.

Having become acquainted with Mr. D., an English artist, who is now occupied in making a copy of Tintoretto's picture of the Miracle of St. Mark, I accompanied him on a rambling excursion to the Academy of Painting, and afterwards among the islands in the lagunes. There are a few choice pictures at the Academy; but the two greatest works are Titian's Assumption of the Virgin, and Tintoretto's Miracle of St. Mark, each of which is considered a chef d'œuvre.

The Assumption of the Virgin was brought here from the church of the Frati. At that time the picture was engrained with dust and the smoke of lamps and wax candles, but it was afterwards partially restored.

In this extensive composition, which is esteemed by the Venetians as a capo d'opera of the master, the assumption of the Virgin is represented in the presence of the apostles. The Virgin in the clouds, accompanied by a choir of angels, is soaring towards the eternal Father, arrayed in all the splendour of heavenly glory. The figure of the Virgin is certainly deficient in dignity, and the drapery appears too cumbersome. But the disposal of the angels around the Virgin is managed with much skill. Such seraphic countenances at once bespeak their heavenly nature and exalt the mind. The apostles, who fill the foreground, are looking upwards with great veneration. Their sacred character has been finely felt by the painter, and the arrangement of the figures is grand and simple.

It is not easy to express an opinion on a work, after it has undergone so much handling as this has done. I may perhaps, however,

venture to say, that the arrangement of the colours in this composition is not in Titian's best manner. Some parts of the colouring are too positive; a defect which might appear less glaring if the picture were placed in a large church sparingly lighted, so as to keep down some of the tints, particularly the red, which appears to predominate.

Two other works of Titian in this collection are not to be forgotten. They are the Presentation of Mary at the Temple, which once belonged to the School of Charity, but which is now appropriated to this institution; and St. John in the Desert, originally painted for the church of Santa Maria Maggiore.

The Presentation at the Temple, by Victor Capaccio, is a charming composition. The Virgin and Child are a lovely group, and the females accompanying her, are full of a grace approaching to Raphael. The colouring has great breadth and clearness. This specimen is a strong proof that the art was far advanced before Titian's time.

I now come to the works of Tintoretto—whose cognomen was "fulmine di pennello"—an extraordinary genius and an impetuous enthu-

siast. His best pictures evince a boundless range of thought, skilful contrasts, and freedom of pencil. Their colouring is of surpassing richness and brilliancy. His great work of the Miracle of St. Mark, which is placed opposite to Titian's Assumption, is an extraordinary effort of genius, and quite sufficient to immortalize the name of Tintoretto. This is a large picture, representing the miraculous deliverance from death of a slave—one of the early Christians—by the interposition of St. Mark. The saint is hovering in the air amidst a stream of light, over the naked slave lying on the ground. Several executioners are endeavouring by all human means to destroy the slave; but every deadly instrument aimed at his body has been shivered by divine interposition, and the victim remains uninjured. The fury of the executioners is lost in wonder, and the bystanders behold their baffled endeavours in amazement, not unmixed with awe. The story of the picture is finely told. The expression of countenance on the part of the Turk, who turning to the judge, and exhibiting the broken instruments of torture, appears to remonstrate on the inutility of persevering in an

attempt which has been rendered so hopeless by the unseen agency of the Christian's God, is admirable; and the whole figure of a young woman holding a child in her arms, is exceedingly beautiful.

It would be difficult to say whether the skilful composition, or the colouring of this work, best deserves admiration. Few painters would have dared to place such a dark mass as is distributed, more or less, over the whole picture, in opposition to a light so intense as is thrown boldly around the saint. This, however, only heightens the grandeur of the effect. The shade which is cast upon the body of the slave appears to be caused from the position of the protecting saint; and the chiaro-scuro throughout, is managed with extraordinary skill. The architecture of the buildings introduced is extremely fine, and worthy of the subject. Either as a composition or a piece of colouring, it might be placed in juxta-position with the best specimens of all the schools without any fear of disparagement *.

* Since the above was written, the Author has read a high eulogium on the same picture in " A Practical Trea-

There are three more paintings by the same master on the opposite wall; the subjects being the death of Abel, our first parents eating the forbidden fruit, and Christ rising from the tomb.

Of Paul Veronese, Giorgione, and the two Palmas, there are some interesting specimens. A few pictures of the Dutch and Flemish schools are likewise attached to this collection, which merit attention. Many excellent paintings have been bequeathed to the academy by a gentleman named Molini, and his useful legacy is worthy of more frequent imitation.

tise on Painting", published in 1827. Mr. Burnet observes,—"The nearest approach to Titian is found in the works of Tintoretto, particularly in his famous picture of the 'Miracle of St. Mark', which is a splendid combination of the rich tones of Titian with the more fresh colouring of Veronese; and could we suppose it placed between two of their most famous works, viz., the 'Peter Martyr' of Titian, and the 'Martyrdom of St. George' of Veronese,—I am confident the one would appear too hot, and the other too cold. If any picture deserves the name of the triumph of painting, it is this work; in the presence of which, when in the Louvre, even the 'Transfiguration' of Raffaelle looked cold and academic."

Titian's pictures possess an extraordinary brilliancy, and unrivalled fulness of colour. They are also filled with a truth which shews that his searching eyes must have been ever intently fixed on nature, and but little observant of cold marble statues. He seized the very soul of the living model before him; his portraits seem to place the persons themselves in your company. His landscapes are full of the grandest and most lovely objects,—always simple, natural, and poetical. You feel as if breathing a purer air when gazing on the azure of his skies and the serenity of his scenes, which realize our brightest ideas of nature. If he did not possess the grace and dignity of Raphael, he was at least as great a master of natural character.

After spending a delightful morning at the Academia, Mr. D. accompanied me in a gondola amongst the neighbouring islands. We landed at the Armenian convent of San Lazaro, where we were courteously received and conducted through the establishment, which contains, among other curiosities, some valuable Armenian manuscripts.

On our return, we visited some of the

churches during the ave Maria; and, after taking coffee under the piazza of St. Mark's square, we directed our course to the Piazzetta, to gaze upon the effect of the moon, which, shedding her soft light upon the churches, palaces, and towers of the tranquil lagunes, made them appear almost a scene of enchantment.

The dark gondolas were gliding noiselessly through the canals. A crowd of persons muffled in cloaks were walking under the arcades and below the granite columns, and the gondoliers were endeavouring to pick up some passengers, whilst their gondolas were lying ready at the steps, dimly lighted with tiny lanterns.

Returning in our walk to the gayer throng of the Piazza of St. Mark, we found some hundreds of coffee-houses and shops lighted up. Groups were collected round some singers and improvisatori, whose scouts were thrusting their caps or tambourines in every direction, for as much money as they could collect from both voluntary and involuntary listeners.

We entered a jeweller's shop under the arcade, to examine specimens of the elegant minute gold chains manufactured here. These

chains are sold by weight, according to the price of bullion and of the labour bestowed on their manufacture; but, comparatively, they are not dear. The Venetians have several manufactures of mirrors and fancy glass articles. The gilded glass beads are an excellent imitation of gold, and they are in some demand in Italy, Africa, and the Ionian Islands. Several of the bottege in the Piazza of St. Mark have a good display of these wares.

I was rather surprised to find so many booksellers' shops at Venice, but I understand they supply many parts of the continent with books, which are printed here at a cheap rate, upon the vilest paper.

Venice is supplied with great abundance of choice fresh meat, vegetables, fruit, wines, &c., of all sorts, and at a very reasonable cost. The fruit, which is fresh gathered and carefully packed, arrives from the opposite shores in great perfection. It is quite fragrant, and the very bloom is on the peaches, grapes, &c., when they are unpacked.

The supply of fish is large and choice, which is a blessing for the poorer classes, as it constitutes a great part of a Catholic's food. During

the republic, it was thought essential to the well being and happiness of the lower classes, that they should be regularly supplied with fish at as reasonable a rate as possible.

The Venetian government took a curious method of putting down the monopoly which the fishermen at one period possessed in their marketable commodity, and of which the lower orders loudly complained. The senate not having the power to abolish the monopoly by direct means, gave it a death-blow by this curious edict. Professedly with the view of enabling the poor to enjoy the luxury at a reasonable rate, a law was passed, which compelled the fishermen to stand, while vending their scaly and finny delicacies, with one leg in a tub of water, and bare-headed, both in summer and winter. The consequence was, that, to save themselves in the one season from being scorched nearly to death by the sun, and in the other from being frozen by the cold, they ever after used their utmost exertions to dispose of their fish as quickly as possible, and at more reasonable prices.

LETTER X.

Leave Venice.—Padua, its Churches, &c.—Travelling Companion. —Vicenza.— Palladio.—Teatro Olimpico. — Valley of the Po. — Verona. — Amphitheatre, &c. — Brescia.—Arrival at Milan.

MILAN, 3d November, 1826.

IF I had remained a few days longer at Venice, they could have been satisfactorily employed in exploring once more all its extraordinary architecture, frescos, and pictures; but Venice is the last place I would select as a residence. A man accustomed to activity and all the natural charms of terra firma, can ill bear to be cooped up beyond a short time among the canals of Venice. One would require to live in it from an early period, to be reconciled to such a prison.

On the 29th I quitted Venice for Padua, and my eyes were quite refreshed when the passage-boat reached the wooded banks of the Brenta. Its elegant Palladian villas, once the retreats of

Venetian nobles, are now mostly inhabited by rich Jewish merchants.

Padua, as you know, is a city of great antiquity. Many of its streets have a venerable but desolate appearance, although some of the public buildings and churches are full of interest and beauty. It has given birth to some eminent men; and in these days she may be proud to own the intrepid traveller, Belzoni, as one of her sons.

The most extraordinary edifice in Padua is Il Salone (the town-hall). It is reared upon arches, and is, I believe, the largest hall in Europe; being 300 feet long, 100 broad, and 100 in height. The Gothic church of Il Santo is very spacious, and more frequented by believers of all ranks than any other,—being dedicated to Antony, the patron saint. The marble tomb of the saint is a beautiful design; and the bassi relievi in the marble panels of the chapel are curious. They represent the miraculous events of St. Antony's life,—miraculous indeed, if one were to believe a tithe of the nonsense that is palmed upon the credulous devotees of the patron saint. The bronze candelabra and lamps of the principal altar are of beautiful

workmanship. Two large, handsome organs are placed above a gallery of marble; and the whole church is well lighted. The walls are, however, greatly disfigured by a number of waxen votive offerings, little mean pictures, and coloured prints.

I attended the church during mass. It was quite crowded with persons of all ranks. As the more devout retired when the service was concluded, they rubbed their hands and beads on St. Antony's tomb, and placed the beads in their bags to rub the members of the family left at home.

The church of San Giustina was built after the design of Palladio; but its exterior is unfinished. The centre of the interior is lighted from three domes, and the pavement is composed of square pieces of red and white marble nicely joined together. The stalls of the choir are of solid oak, beautifully carved, and the altars are composed of the finest marble.

There is a dull public garden, called Prato del Valle, surrounded by trees and statues, where the indolent citizens enjoy their lounge. The streets have a remarkably picturesque air towards the public market, where the houses

are in a dilapidated condition. The young market-women and servants were attired in becoming taste. Some of them wore round beaver hats, and others had their hair carefully braided and fixed round the head by means of polished silver pins.

In one of the markets, all of which appear to be supplied with excellent commodities, a variety of birds, both alive and dead, were exposed for sale as edibles. Even the poor little singing birds seem to be acceptable to the gullet of an Italian.

Towards the evening, I walked a little way out of the town to the banks of the Brenta, to see one of Palladio's palaces, which is a model of elegance and convenience. The grounds round the building are tastefully laid out, and adorned with statues and some pretty weeping willows. I saw the cupolas and towers of St. Antony's Church from this spot, rising beautifully above the town, with the Euganian hills in the rear.

At the hotel I was fortunate in meeting Mr. F., who happened to be returning to Switzerland by St. Gothard, and we agreed to travel together. On the 31st, we departed from

Padua, in a new handsome diligence. At Vicenza we made a short halt, which was occupied in seeing some of the palaces of Palladio. Vicenza abounds with his designs, which have a purity and elegance never exceeded in modern times.

Palladio was peculiarly happy in the arrangement of his buildings. Accommodation; a happy application of the various orders, and symmetry of proportion, he invariably studied. His designs please equally from every point of view, which is an important matter, and one too often neglected by modern architects.

The Teatro Olimpico is an interesting relic of Palladio. It is upon the plan of an ancient theatre, of the elliptical figure. Timber has been chiefly used in its erection, and it has sustained some injury from damp weather and neglect. The scenery of the Olimpico is composed of solid materials, and the perspective is curiously arranged. An ornamental gate with statues constitutes the foreground, with diverging streets behind, lined with palaces and temples.

The orchestra is placed in the centre of the house; and from it, the seats for the audience

rise above each other in a semicircle. The members of the Olympic Academy enacted Greek tragedies in this theatre in former times, but at present they are not so classical in their notions. A concert was given in it to the Emperor Francis, when he visited this city in 1816.

After quitting Vicenza, we travelled along the base of the Alps, among rich fields shaded with vines and mulberry trees. The rugged hills, with villages and convents scattered over them, are full of pictorial charms, and added considerably to the pleasure which we derived from this day's journey.

As we approached Verona, the weather was clear, and favourable for rambling. Immediately after our arrival, I walked through the town. Verona is charmingly situated on the Adige, which flows through the city in a rapid wide stream. The Tyrolese Alps lie to the north, and some of the streets are built upon the commencement of the ascent. Marble is abundant in the neighbouring hills; and as it has been used in many of the buildings, they have a striking appearance.

After an agreeable walk through the city, I

was conducted to the amphitheatre. This interesting feature of the place is one of the most remarkable monuments of Roman grandeur, and is supposed to have been built by Domitian: its materials are marble. The exterior is dilapidated, and disfigured by shabby doors leading into a few of the internal recesses, which are occupied by poor families. Through one of these places the guide took me into the interior, which I was surprised to find in such good preservation. The oval arena in the centre is 220 feet long by 130 broad; and the amphitheatre, when filled in former days, accommodated 20,000 persons. The external circumference is 1,280 feet. The old custode pointed out different passages for admitting gladiators and wild animals to fight and devour each other, for the gratification of the semi-barbarous audiences of ancient days. A small tenement (a sort of Punch-and-Judy-looking affair) is erected on the arena, for theatrical exhibitions, which ought to be taken down. It is quite out of its place, and destroys the unity of the amphitheatrical plan. I kept lingering and ruminating in this interesting place till near sunset, trying to link the dying scenes which once disgraced the arena,

and the inhuman shouts of the callous audience, with the present stillness of the spot: when the lateness of the hour recalled me from my reveries.

There is a circus round the amphitheatre, forming a parade ground for troops as well as a fine promenade for the inhabitants.

The town house and the curious old gate of Galiemes are worthy of mention. Outside of the former, are niches containing busts of Pliny the elder, Cornelius, Vitruvius, and others, natives of Verona.

On the banks of the Adige, I observed some fine mill seats, gardens, and fields, where women were busy in milking their cows. The chimneys, of various handsome shapes, are built on the very edge of the projecting roofs; some of which are in imitation of castles and towers, and have a curious appearance.

A sarcophagus is shewn here, which they call the Tomb of Juliet. Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, you are doubtless aware, was founded upon one of the bloody feuds of the Viscontis and the Carraras, alternate masters of Verona.

The neighbouring plains abound in fine pas-

ture and plantations of mulberry trees, with vines twining round them. Gardens and olive groves, intermixed with the laurel and pine, enliven the landscape. The valley between the Adige and the Po is rendered very productive by alluvial deposits, which fertilize the soil. Most of the extensive plains in northern Italy are similarly enriched, but the same natural advantages are not always turned to equally good account. Whether this arises from ignorance or supineness on the part of the agriculturists it would be difficult to determine. The continual wars and change of masters have thrown back the Italians and arrested the march of the useful arts amazingly during latter times. Climate, and education, doubtless, tincture the Italian character very strongly; and days, and sometimes weeks, of abstinence must be detrimental to the working classes, by prostrating both their physical and moral powers; and the continual church festivals, which are strictly observed, interfere greatly with their labours.

After quitting Verona, on the following morning we passed Peschiera, a fortress of great

strength, where the barracks are handsome and commodious. During the summer season, however, it is an unhealthy quarter, as fevers prevail in consequence of malaria, generated by heat acting on the surrounding marshes.

The mists which nearly covered the Lago di Garda, as we passed along its shores, prevented our enjoying the surrounding scenery. A partial dispersion of these vapours, however, enabled us to obtain a transient glimpse of the mountains above the lake, partly covered with snow, and to observe the waters undulating on the smooth shore.

We soon rolled through an old shattered Venetian fortress, and just before reaching Brescia we passed a foundry for cannon, established by Napoleon. Brescia is a pleasant looking town. The walls on the ramparts are gravelled and planted with fine trees. The soil here does not appear to be so good as at Verona. The peasantry in this quarter seemed to be remarkably well dressed; some of the females rather handsome: their hair plaited carefully, and folded over the head, a large ornamental pin of silver stuck through the folds,

and several smaller pins placed among the hair at the top of the head, rendered their appearance altogether classical.

After travelling all night, we arrived at Milan in the morning at four o'clock, and alighted at Reichmann's Hotel. It has rained incessantly since our arrival, but we perambulated various quarters of the town notwithstanding; I paid a long visit to the Duomo, where I found a number of men employed in hanging rich crimson draperies, and fastening pictures on the pillars for a church festival.

Mr. F. having made an agreement for a small carriage to convey us towards St. Gothard, we shall leave Milan this day at noon.

Reichmann's Hotel afforded us such excellent accommodation at a reasonable rate, that I cannot refrain from recommending it strongly to future travellers. It is a large handsome building on the Corso di Porta Romana. The table is admirably served; the apartments are comfortably furnished; and the servants are numerous and obliging.

LETTER XI.

Travelling Companion.—Leave Milan.—Switzerland.—Canton of Tessin.—Scenery.—Lugano.—Bellinzona.—Faido.—Stormy weather.

AIROLO, 7th Nov. 1826.

I HAVE found an excellent travelling companion in Mr. F. He is a merchant of Basle, but appears to be more enamoured of Italian skies, and the fine arts, than with the counting-house. He contrives to visit Italy occasionally, and his father attends to their mercantile concerns during his absence. The first night after leaving Milan we slept at Como, which is built at the south-western branch of the lake. At a short distance there is a range of low hills, which encircle the town and shelter it from cold winds.

Early on the following day we entered the Swiss canton of Tessin. The vines were seen in various places climbing among

precipices, and waving to the breeze, or hung in festoons from tree to tree. An occasional chapel or altar, adorned with humble frescos, peeped forth, where some few Catholic travellers and peasants were kneeling before the altar.

On reaching the narrow, straggling lake of Lugano, we crossed it in a rude, crazy boat. The lake was perfectly clear, although the heavens were charged with dark, stormy clouds, and the mountains appeared partially covered by a recent fall of snow.

The town of Lugano, situated in a small bay on the northern side of the Lake, is constructed in the Italian style, and filled with thriving vineyards and gardens. It assumes the form of a crescent, with the mountain of St. Salvador, clothed with woods, and projecting into the lake. Mountains of various fine forms rise in succession in the back ground, enlivened by villages and woodlands. Lugano is a great entrepôt of Swiss traders, and carries on a profitable intercourse with the northern parts of Italy.

At this place we found the roads flooded. Regular conveyances had ceased; and, having

discharged our Milan vetturino, we hired a Swiss voiturier to convey us to Airolo. There was some difficulty, however, in bringing him to any reasonable terms at this season, which might be well named out of season. He agreed at last to take one-third of the sum demanded in the first instance.

We began to find the variety of current coins extremely troublesome. Each canton has its own money, which is generally depreciated in a neighbouring canton, when exchanged or taken in payment by the inn-keepers.

Whilst our new Jehu was occupied in feeding himself and his horses, we strolled through the town. The houses are built of stone, and in a pleasing style of architecture. The Cathedral is in an elevated situation, and from its terrace there is a beautiful prospect. Villas and gardens adorn the environs, where the citron, the orange, the almond tree, and the vine, mingle their branches together. In the Capuchin church we saw a cleverly painted fresco, by Luigni, of the infant Christ, the Virgin, and St. John. The composition consists of the Infant with a lamb: the Virgin regarding the former with a look of much ten-

derness; and St. John pointing to the Infant. It is painted in a clear, bold manner, and with a free pencil.

In the afternoon we quitted Lugano amidst rain and fog, in which the Lago Maggiore, to our left, was completely enveloped. After travelling through a bad mountain pass, the carriage descended in a winding direction on Bellinzona, which we reached in the evening. Bellinzona is the capital of the canton of Tessin. The situation of this old town is singularly beautiful and picturesque. Three castles occupy the hills immediately in front of the town, and a range of bold mountains rises behind. The river Ticino flows through the valley on the right, and at a short distance afterwards, empties itself into the Lago Maggiore.

Skirting the base of the mountains on the right, the Ticino was seen flowing through the valley to our left; sometimes agitated by masses of rock which impeded its progress. Wild, precipitous mountains bounded the view on the opposite side of the river, towards the west. The fields were hidden by drifted snow in many places, and where any green patches remained, they were occupied by cattle tended

by women and boys. The peasants appear to be an ill-featured race, dirty, and miserably clothed.

In this valley the houses are constructed of loose grey stones in a slovenly style, neither Swiss nor Italian in appearance, and devoid of that comfort so conspicuous on the other side of the Alps.

At the village of Faido we were lodged for the night in a humble but comfortable inn, where we enjoyed the warmth of a crackling wood fire, after a cold and fatiguing ride. Dinner over, we unbuckled our sketch books, and beguiled the remainder of the night in fixing our sketches and in writing. My travelling companion shewed me a few pictures, and articles in mosaic and bronze, which he had purchased at Rome. Thus were we occupied when the landlord entered the room at midnight, to announce that our beds were ready, and that the voiturier would be in attendance early in the morning.

Shortly after quitting Faido, the road turned into a wild pass cut through the middle of precipices, where we met a number of muleteers with pack-horses and mules laden with mer-

chandize. The animals did not keep in the middle of the track, but advanced in a straggling manner. As they approached close to the edge of abrupt precipices, I expected to see some of them fall over, but they turned adroitly, at the proper juncture, without any assistance. Some of the mules brayed hideously, and frightened one of our horses so much, that two men were obliged to hold him, to prevent his precipitating the vehicle into the abyss.

The Ticino was now seen pent up in a narrow channel, among high rocks of every shape, intermingled with trees and plants. The river was much swollen by the melted snows, and in some places, the detached rocks scattered in its bed caused a hollow noise, which reverberated through the pass. Such is the scenery of the pass Dazio Grande.

Before sunset a fall of snow, violently drifted by the wind, quickly blocked up the road in many places. With some difficulty our driver procured a sledge, to which we were transferred, and traced the road to the village of Piota, where we were storm-bound during the 6th.

LETTER XII.

Attempt to pass St. Gothard.—Snow Storm on the Mountain.—Return to Airolo.—Drivers buried in Snow.—Recovered.

Airolo, 8th Nov. 1826.

The late snow storm swelled the mountain streams to a very extraordinary degree. As seen from the valley, rushing downwards with amazing violence, they appeared sufficiently powerful to bring down the huge rocks which seemed to dispute their progress.

The weather being more favourable on the 7th, we sent our luggage on a traineau over the pass, and followed in a sledge to Airolo, where we agreed with a Swiss courier to guide us over St. Gothard. At noon we started from Airolo, mounted on two stout horses, and the guide proceeded on foot.

After a tedious ride through soft snow, we reached the middle of the pass, and our difficul-

ties then commenced. The snow fell more abundantly, accompanied by occasional gusts of wind, which nearly blinded us. In this plight we reached the rear of a number of sledges completely wedged in, as a soft or dust avalanche had recently fallen over the pass in advance of the foremost sledges. The drivers were endeavouring to cut a passage through this formidable mass; and after half an hour of excessive labour, they were only enabled to advance a few paces. Meantime the storm did not abate; the courier assured us that if we did not immediately return, we should be in some danger; and, profiting by the warning, we turned back for Airolo once more.

The descent was difficult, as all traces of the road were lost; and the experience of the guide alone extricated us from our unpleasant situation. The horses missed their footing twice, and with great exertion we saved ourselves from being hurried into a snowy gulf.

The drifting snow upon our faces proved most annoying and painful. Our limbs became stiff with cold, and our hands so benumbed that we could no longer feel the reins. In this condition we happily reached the bottom of the pass.

When arrived at Airolo, the innkeeper congratulated us on our safe return, and we once more entered his house of suffering,—for of entertainment it deserved not the name. Nothing could exceed the scantiness of the ménage, or the bad quality of the little that was to be had. The landlord himself was a Job's comforter,—remarking, that, from every appearance, the storm might prevent our passing the mountain for some days.

Our situation was truly uncomfortable. The money in our pockets could not meet our expenses for more than two days longer; and our portmanteaus, containing the ways and means, might at that moment, for aught we knew, be lying buried in the snow of St. Gothard.

We had scarcely recovered our spirits, when we were roused by the lamentable cries of the villagers, and witnessed a scene of much distress. Two muleteers had arrived from the spot we left in the morning, with the sad tidings of twelve drivers having been thrown over the mountain, with their mules and sledges, and buried in the snow. The drivers who escaped were endeavouring to extricate their less fortunate companions from their perilous situation,

when the muleteers were dispatched to alarm the village. A number of young men hurried to the spot with spades and lanterns, whilst the females were seen running to and fro in great agony. The anxiety we felt respecting the fate of the sufferers on the mountain prevented our retiring to rest. Towards nine o'clock the storm abated. At half past ten we thought we heard a distant sound of human voices. In a few minutes shouts of joy rent the air—when the villagers returned with their relatives or friends saved from an untimely grave. Men, women, and children were now seen embracing and congratulating each other, and smiles of joy and gratitude mingled with their tears.

One of the intrepid deliverers gave us an account of their journey. No life was lost, except that of a poor mule, which was crushed to death by a sledge. An old man was much bruised, but he reached the village with some assistance. The remaining drivers and their animals escaped with some slight contusions.

This day's dawn was ushered in by another storm. We are therefore detained, and I take the opportunity afforded by it to write this letter.

LETTER XIII.

Journey across St. Gothard.—Hospitale.—Snow Storm.—Bad Roads.—Grand Scenery.—Canton of Uri.—Altdorf.—Lake of Lucerne.—Lucerne.—View.—New Acquaintance.—Basle.—Library.—Hans Holbein's Works, &c.

BASLE, 12th Nov., 1826.

THE weather had a more propitious appearance on the 9th, when two guides offered to conduct us over the mountain. They added, that the road was not passable on horseback, but that if we went on foot, the obstructions could be avoided by crossing a hardened avalanche, a mile to the left of the road. We hired the guides forthwith; and after getting our boots greased, we pulled over them a pair of thick worsted hose, and, each provided with a long iron-pointed staff, we commenced the ascent.

For a mile after leaving Airolo the road was tolerable; but during the remainder of the as-

cent we waded through soft, deep snow. At the pine-forest surrounding the Capella del Bosco, we looked down on Airolo for the last time, with satisfied feelings. Shortly afterwards we saw the spot where the drivers were saved from perishing in the snow; and several men were still occupied in digging for broken sledges.

Thence we diverged from the regular road, which was still blocked up with snow, and passed over an avalanche to our left, where the ascent was very fatiguing. Respiration became painful, and the guides told us to lie down. We followed their advice, and in a few minutes our strength was renewed, and we could again breathe with more freedom. After a lapse of two hours and a quarter we reached the Hospice, (formerly the residence of monks,) our long-desired goal, somewhat fatigued. This miserable hovel, the temporary refuge of all travellers, was crowded with muleteers.

While we were taking a mouthful of stale black bread and cheese, accompanied with sour wine, the only cheer to be had, some hawkers from Altdorf fair entered. They told us a number of carriers' sledges were near at hand from Altdorf, which was consolatory, as it as-

sured us of the road in that direction being passable. We soon commenced the descent with a new guide, and passed the carriers, who were giving their horses a short rest, up to their middle in snow.

On arriving at the village of Hospitale, we had the satisfaction to find our portmanteaus, which, after several narrow escapes in the storm, had been safely lodged with the landlord of the inn. Having been strangers, of late, to a comfortable meal, we enjoyed the good dinner which this inn afforded; but we determined to proceed on our journey, to make up for the time lost on the other side of St. Gothard. Having procured, with great difficulty—for the night was not over-tempting for travelling in wretched roads—two small traineaux, we fixed our portmanteaus in them, and seated ourselves as well as we could on the top of them. The regions around were now full of Alpine grandeur, which we could only see partially when the clouds which covered the moon occasionally rolled away.

After passing under a gallery cut through the rock, we descended to the Devil's Bridge, where the scenery is wild, rugged, and stupendous.

The bridge consists of a rude arch thrown across a deep chasm over the river Reuss, which here assumes the form of a cataract rushing down the sides of the mountains over huge fragments of rock. The agitated river throws up the spray to a great height; and its hoarse murmurs, increased by the late storms, were quite deafening. I only regret not having witnessed the grandeur of the scene in the day-time. The credulous portion of the Swiss believe that works of any great difficulty are always accomplished by the devil. This bridge is considered a fair specimen of his handywork, and has acquired the name of Teufels-bruck.

About eleven o'clock at night we reached a comfortable mountain-inn, where we slept.

Early on the following morning we arrived at Altdorf, the capital of the canton of Uri. There is a clumsy tower in the centre of the town, on the walls of which are painted the remarkable incidents in the life of William Tell,—a name most dear to the Swiss, and associated with their earliest recollections of liberty. There is also a fountain, with a figure of William Tell over it, which covers the spot where he is said

to have shot at the apple placed on his son's head.

It is not many years since Altdorf was nearly destroyed by fire. The new streets are substantially erected, and the whole place has an airy, clean appearance. The fair was not quite over, as some booths were still standing, filled with cloth, hats, clocks, &c.; but there seemed to be a lack of customers.

About a mile and a half from this place is Fluelen, on the Lake of Lucerne, (or of the four cantons,) where we embarked in an open boat for the town of Lucerne. The four cantons of Uri, Schweitz, Underwalden, and Lucerne surround this noble lake, the variety and beauty of whose scenery cannot be surpassed even in this picturesque country. The noble form of the Rigi is seen in the distance, to the right, and Mount Pilate rises majestically from the western shore of the lake to a height of 5,760 feet. Towards Lucerne are cultivated heights of a pastoral kind, filled with cattle and sheep, behind a rich valley, covered with pretty villages and châlets. The numerous headlands, and the graceful windings of the lake along the shores

of the different cantons, afford an infinite variety of scenery to the admirer of Nature. At a few miles from Lucerne, on our right, were the ruins of Hapsburg, the residence of Rodolph the First. It rained, unfortunately, during the greater part of the day, which marred the enjoyment we might otherwise have derived from the contemplation of such a prospect.

On reaching Lucerne we were drenched with rain, and glad to emerge from a leaky boat.

The city of Lucerne is divided into different parts, united by three long, covered bridges. The sides of the latter are ornamented with curious paintings of Scriptural history, the most remarkable military exploits of the Swiss, and the whimsical allegory of the Dance of Death. There is nothing remarkable in the architecture, with the exception of the cathedral, which contains an organ of great size. There is a good deal of sameness, and a sort of sober monotony in the appearance of the towns throughout Switzerland; but the romantic Swiss cottage by the side of a lake or mountain stream, or one of their villages crowning some craggy mountain, with cows feeding in the adjoining valley, and the stupendous grandeur of the

surrounding mountains, constitute the true beau ideal of pastoral life and romantic beauty.

From a height behind the town there is a superb view, admirably suited for a panorama. The city, with its spires, towers, and bridges, is seen on the margin of the lake, with a number of small farms on either hand. The clear lake lies beyond, with numerous small bays and wooded promontories, and cultivated grounds covered with villages or châlets round the shores. The mountains of the four cantons form the back-ground of this lovely prospect; and the mighty Alps, crowned with their eternal snows, constitute the extreme distance towards the south.

At the Inn of the White Horse we were lodged and served like nabobs. It is perhaps the best I have met with in Switzerland, and deserves to be made known to the traveller.

The following morning, at four o' clock, we quitted Lucerne in the diligence for Basle.

On reaching the canton of Soleure, we found the roads extremely heavy. In crossing the Jura Mountains, which stretch across this canton, it was necessary to employ extra horses to drag along the lumbering carriage.

At dinner the passengers seemed to revive, and were inclined to shew more bonhommie towards each other than when locked up vis-à-vis in the coach. Good cheer works wonders on the road. It chases away all dull humours or prejudices, and affords a tolerably fair opportunity of speculating on the different characters among whom you may happen to be thrown. It was in this way I got acquainted with Professor K., of Basle, whose good sense, amenity, and obliging disposition I had reason to remember. The day following my arrival at Basle, this worthy man called at my hotel. Knowing that I intended passing a day here, as being a place of some interest to a stranger, he invited me to dinner, and volunteered his assistance in shewing me whatever was worth seeing in the city.

You are aware that Basle is built on the banks of the Rhine, and a remarkable place in Swiss history, particularly during the Reformation. Near this point, the Rhine flows in a deep wide stream, and turns suddenly to the north, after running from east to west. The town lies on both banks of the river, the least important moiety being in the confines of the

canton joining Baden, the opposite moiety is on the confines of France, and the two are connected by a bridge.

The situation of this city is admirably adapted for trade. It is duly appreciated by the inhabitants, who are an industrious, careful, and thriving race. A variety of manufactures have been established, and an extensive trade is carried on with France, Germany, and other countries.

The canton of Basle joins the French frontier at a mile and a half from the city; and the dismantled fortifications of Hunningen are within forty minutes' walk of the city gates. Basle is built in an old-fashioned, substantial style, little remarkable for architectural beauty. Some of the best buildings are in the Frei Strasse, where there is a wide space for a market.

The cathedral is an interesting specimen of the mixed Gothic, although the two dark grey towers at one extremity have no pretensions to beauty. In its interior plan it is simple, massive, and of agreeable proportions. The sacred remains of the learned and elegant Erasmus are deposited under a marble tomb, near the pulpit.

As Professor K. knew the keeper of the public library, we were permitted to examine it at leisure.

This establishment contains many valuable and interesting objects. Among the manuscripts, I saw some volumes of curious letters, written by the early Church reformers; and documents in the hand-writing of Erasmus.

The collection of printed books is small, but amongst them are some scarce editions of works published in the fifteenth century.

In two of the rooms is kept a choice and interesting collection of Hans Holbein's paintings, and drawings with the pen, pencil, and crayons. They are generally in excellent preservation; and some of the specimens are extremely fine. In these choice productions of a native artist of eminence can be traced the different styles of his laborious life. The Passion of Our Saviour, in eight compartments, is perhaps the most remarkable specimen. It breathes throughout a fine religious sentiment, appropriately suited to the touching subject; blends fine drawing with minuteness, and the colours are very brilliant.

There are two small portraits of a lady, both highly finished. The subject was a fine young

woman, to whom Holbein paid his addresses. She is first represented by the doting painter, con amore, as full of attractive charms, accompanied by the roguish little God of Love. It appears, however, the beloved one grew fickle, and ultimately discarded the poor painter for a richer suitor. Holbein got over his attachment, and vented his wrath on another small panel, whereon he has painted the lady in the character of Lais, the celebrated Grecian courtezan. The money spread in profusion before her shews, that although the painter had forgotten his love, he remembered the temptation which had deprived him of its object. There is a carefully finished small picture of the painter's friend and patron, Erasmus, writing his commentary on St. Matthew. It is a profile, and painted with much sweetness.

In another room is a choice collection of prints, and a curious assortment of Roman bronzes, urns, coins, mosaics, and other interesting antiquities, found in digging at Augst, in the vicinity.

After spending some time in the library, and wandering through the town and along the

banks of the Rhine, we returned to Professor K.'s house to dinner. This gentleman is a German, and he told me he went through the German and Russian campaigns, under the Emperor Napoleon. At the termination of the war, he betook himself to his favourite study —mathematics, and was afterwards appointed a professor in the University of Basle; a suitable reward for merit and application.

For this place, where I parted with my worthy travelling companions, I shall ever retain a kindly feeling; and if again it should be my lot to visit Basle, I hope sincerely to find them in the enjoyment of health and happiness.

LETTER XIV.

Leave Basle.—Strasbourg.—Gothic Cathedral.—Tomb of Marshal Saxe.—Theatre.—Departure.—Nancy.—Paris.

PARIS, 20th November, 1826.

EARLY on the 13th, I was seated in a commodious diligence for Strasbourg. We stopped at Mulhausen to dinner, which was served in good style. It rained heavily between Mulhausen and Colmar, but the evening proved fine, and the moon rose in all her splendour. At Colmar, a Parisian lady, with two pretty daughters, joined our party in the diligence. They were exceedingly frank and agreeable; and although they appeared to be of a superior class, they assumed nothing to themselves on that account.

After travelling all night, beguiled occasionally by the lively tongues of the ladies, we alighted at seven in the morning at Strasbourg. This venerable city lies in the department of

the Lower Rhine, at a quarter of a league from the river Rhine, and is one of the most important fortifications in France. It can boast of some fine buildings, although the streets are generally heavy and gloomy in their appearance. The cathedral, which is the grand feature of the place, denotes the ancient importance of Strasbourg. It is a sumptuous specimen of florid Gothic architecture. The western front, in its general appearance, is magnificent, but to describe the numerous details in a letter would be impossible. The principal gate is admirable in its proportions; the elaborate sculpture and basso-relievo employed in its decoration evince a variety and skill that would baffle modern artists. Besides the four kings on horseback in front, there are in inner recesses bassi-relievi of the Last Supper, the Passion, and other scriptural subjects. The two smaller gates are also profusely ornamented, but the numerous details fatigue the eye, and never leave that agreeable recollection which the simple grandeur of the Greek temple invariably produces.

The interior has a unity of design which is extremely pleasing. The noble broad nave,

the clustering pillars forming the arches, and the rich stained glass windows, cannot fail to impress every admirer of church architecture with their surpassing beauty. The round stained glass window over the principal entrance is particularly brilliant. The principal altar is of simple and fine proportions. Near the altar is a clock of ingenious workmanship, the work of a German. It is out of order, and I was assured that no clock-maker here possesses sufficient skill to repair it. In the centre of the church there is a very fine large organ, with a Gothic screen, which accords well with the plan of the edifice.

There are some pictures on the walls, of the present school, but they are not particularly good. At one extremity of the church a number of girls and boys were seated, whilst several priests were employed in catechising them in religious matters.

Incessant rain on the day of my arrival prevented me from examining the tower of the cathedral, but the weather being fine on the following day, I had an excellent opportunity of seeing this beautiful piece of architecture. The tower is 470 feet high, which is nearly the height

of the great pyramid of Egypt. The proportions are admirable; so much so that you are not sensible of its great altitude till you have reached the summit. The ascent is by spiral steps, the curved line of which is distinctly traced when at a distance from the building. One-third of the ascent from the bottom is on the outside of the tower, and a rail is fixed at intervals only, thereby rendering the ascent rather unsafe for the delicate or nervous.

After being perched on the summit, so far above the rest of the world,—for I was alone,—I need not say how insignificant I felt under the canopy of heaven, and how extremely diminutive appeared the other works of man when compared with this huge pile.

When the tower is viewed at a little distance, its open work gives it an extraordinary air of elegance and lightness. As a whole, however, it appears to want that delicacy of finish which is so beautiful a feature in the cathedral of Antwerp.

In the Protestant church of St. Thomas there is a costly monument in marble, erected to the memory of the celebrated Marshal Saxe. It is worth seeing, and a small book containing its

description is to be had of the person who shews it.

At the extremity of the public walk a handsome modern theatre has been erected. The portico consists of six Ionic columns supporting a pediment with six statues on its summit. The interior is richly painted and gilded. Colson, one of the best actors of the Odeon at Paris, was the star of the evening, and the remainder of the company appeared to be of respectable talent. The orchestra, however, was very mediocre and badly conducted.

At no great distance from the cathedral a large market is held, which, in France, invariably presents a great display of character and humour.

The Alsacian peasants appear to be a mixed race. They are stout and well made, and all remarkably well clothed. Their language is a sad patois, a sort of jumble of German and French.

There was a liberal display of all the provisions, vegetables, and fruit in season, and the various supplies were selling at moderate prices. Some of the best shops are round the market and in the streets leading to it.

Strasbourg is celebrated for some particular manufactures. The foie d'oie is one of the dainties which is prepared here for the gourmands. It is put up in a thick crust or pie of different sizes, and sent to various parts of Europe. The wretched geese in this country are doomed to suffer under the most refined cruelty previous to their being killed. The feathers are plucked from their bodies, and the birds, after being crammed with food, are placed before a large fire or heated stove, by which means the liver becomes enlarged and tender; then their death warrant is signed. A dish of these livers made its appearance at the table d'hôte, to the great gratification of some bons vivants.

When I left Strasbourg, on the 16th, the weather was unpropitious, which augmented the uninteresting appearance of the country, although it could scarcely be judged of at this season.

Nancy was the first considerable town, at which we made a short stay. It was in former times the capital of the gallant Dukes of Lorraine, and is one of the best built towns I have seen in France. The gates of the town have

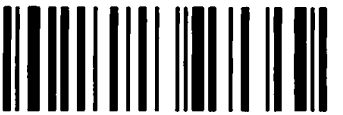
the appearance of triumphal arches, and the streets are wide and regular. The city is built of white stone, and if the streets have a fault, it is the uniformity of their appearance.

After entering Champagne we halted for a few minutes at Epernay—famous for its wine. We drank a few bottles of that exhilarating beverage, for which they charged us two francs and a half per bottle.

I arrived last night in Paris. And here ends my long journey—through some of the fairest and most interesting regions on the face of the globe; a journey which has given birth to sensations I can never forget; which has awakened recollections I scarce hoped to experience; which has gratified alike my ardent love of all that is great and beautiful in nature, and my fondness for every production of ancient and modern art.

THE END.

G. Woodfall, Printer, Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.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